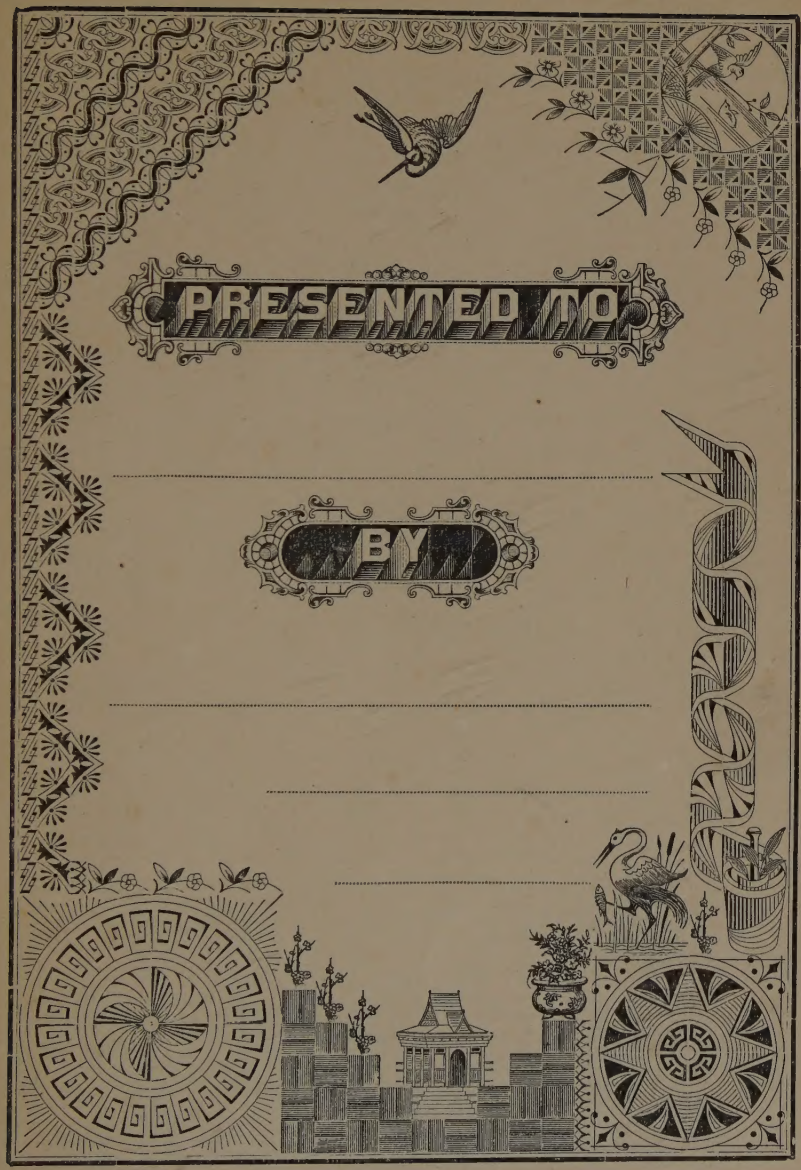
Among the Poets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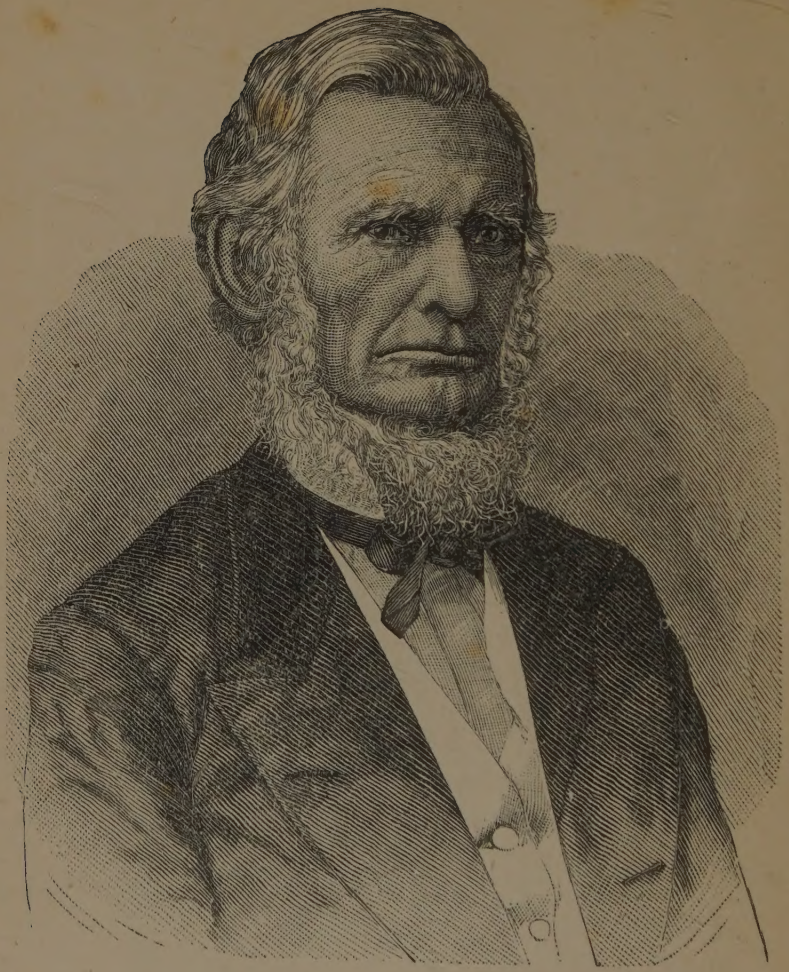

Yours Truly
A A Smith

Among the Poets.

A CHOICE SELECTION

OF

The Best Poems by the Best Authors,

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

By A. A. SMITH, A.M.,
President Northwestern College, Naperville, Ill.

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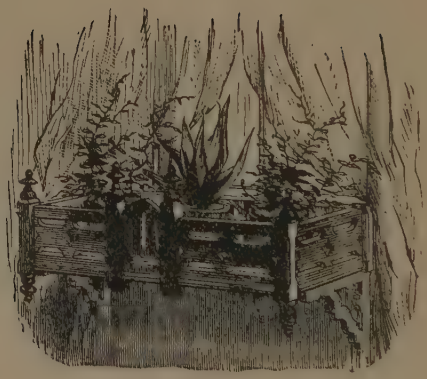
Introduction.

IN preparing "Among the Poets" for the public the Author has gathered into one volume some of the most brilliant gems of song. These are not confined to one theme. Here the careful reader may worship with the most devout of different ages,—breathe the tender strains of love familiar to every human heart,—with Trowbridge bless the "Golden Stair" of children,—feel the thrill of our national poems,—laugh heartily with those who still see the amusing side of life. The variety renders it suitable for a souvenir, and the merit of its literary contents will secure the commendation to which it is entitled.

Unfortunately there are some readers for whom poetry has no attraction. They see no beauty and learn no truth unless presented in the plain garb of prose. Yet the highest beauty and grandest truth in human thought is arrayed in white-robed poetry. Divine communication of heavenly truth was first revealed by prophecy in poetic form; and may not the bursts of rapture at Creation's morning, and at the birth of the blessed Redeemer, be typical of the joys of the world to come where life will be one enraptured poem, and praise find full expression in the blessedness of song?

A. A. Smith.



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AMONG THE POETS.

The Angels' Search.

I HEARD the glorious multitude, I saw their lights afar,
As, mounting up the golden stairs, they passed from star to star;
Each robed in snowy whiteness, all crowned with sunless light,
They swept athwart the ether, in the still and solemn night.

I saw the trail of glory — a glowing pathway laid,
As the vision, hasting onward, a golden splendor made.
Each angel drooped his pinion, a palm enfolded each,
But from those forms celestial came neither voice nor speech.

Each wore the air of one who, going forth to find,
Intently gazeth forward, forgetting things behind;
Each bore the air of one who knows that not in vain
Are bent his footsteps onward — he shall return again!

Lo! 'tis a shout triumphant, afar that shout is raised:
"We have found the King Messiah — God's holy name be praised!
Behold his star appeareth, outshining with its ray,
All other orbs of heaven in its brightness melt away."

Then swift along the golden line a burst of music thrills,
Till night awakes in wonder, and earth with gladness fills.
The heavenly host descending, where glory opens wide,
In rapt, adoring wonder, proclaims — our Christmas-tide.

I saw the glorious multitude, their light shone out afar,
As, passing down those shining stairs, they swept from star to star;
Till guided by that herald light, and following where it led,
They knelt before a manger, around an infant's bed.

"The mystery of godliness!" Royal David's son behold!
In hushed and solemn silence their snowy wings they fold;
They see no cradle lowly, no weeping weakness there,
But Deity incarnate, content our flesh to wear.

Then from those lips angelic breaks forth that song of praise
Whose echoes still float o'er us, in these our Christmas days:
"The Lord is come with man to dwell, is come in very deed!"
Awake, my heart; take up the song, the joyful message speed.

"To us this day a child is born, to us a son is given."
O weeping Mary, cease to weep, be thine the joy of heaven!
For God's good gift to us to-day, His well-loved, only Son,
Brings peace to earth, good-will to man, and joy to every one!

Though from the cradle looms the cross, though tears through gladness shine,
Yet far beyond, all radiant, all crowned with love divine,
Redemption stands omnipotent, and waits to see the end,
When Peace embraceth Righteousness, and Truth and Mercy blend!

Christmas Night.

AT last thou art come, little Saviour!
And thine angels fill midnight with song;
Thou art come to us, gentle Creator!
Whom thy creatures have sighed for so long.

Thou art come to thy beautiful Mother;
She hath looked on thy marvelous face;
Thou art come to us, Maker of Mary!
And she was thy channel of grace.

Thou hast brought with thee plentiful pardon,
And our souls overflow with delight;
Our hearts are half broken, dear Jesus!
With the joy of this wonderful night.

We have waited so long for thee, Saviour!
Art thou come to us, dearest, at last?
Oh, bless thee, dear Joy of thy Mother!
This is worth all the wearisome past!

Thou art come, thou art come, Child of Mary!
Yet we hardly believe thou art come;—
It seems such a wonder to have thee,
New Brother! with us in our home.

Thou wilt stay with us, Master and Maker!
Thou wilt stay with us now evermore:
We will play with thee, beautiful Brother!
On Eternity's jubilant shore.

The Birth of the Year.

LET us speak low—the infant is asleep;
The frosty hills grow sharp, the day is near,
And Phosphor with his taper comes to peep
Into the cradle of the new-born year.
Hush! the infant is asleep—
Monarch of the day and night;
Whisper—yet it is not light,
The infant is asleep.

Those arms shall crush great serpents ere to-morrow;
His closed eye shall wake to laugh and weep;
His lips shall curl with mirth and writhe with sorrow
And charm up Truth and Beauty from the deep.
Softly—softly—let us keep
Our vigils; visions cross his rest,
Prophetic pulses stir his breast,
Although he be asleep.

Now, Life and Death armed in his presence wait;
Genii with lamps are standing at the door;
Oh, he shall sing sweet songs, he shall relate
Wonder, and glory, and hopes untold before;
Murmur melodies that may creep
Into his ears of old sublime;
Let the youngest born of Time
Hear music in his sleep.

Quickly he shall awake; the East is bright,
And the hot glow of the unseen sun
Hath kissed his brow with promise of its light;
His cheek is red with victory to be won.
Quickly shall our king awake,
Strong as giants, and arise;
Sager than old and wise
The infant shall awake.

His childhood shall be forward, wild, and thwart;
His gladness fitful, and his anger blind;
But tender spirits shall o'ertake his heart—
Sweet tears and golden moments bland and kind;
He shall give delight and take,
Charm and chant, dismay and soothe,
Raise the dead and touch with youth—
Oh, sing that he may wake!

Where is the sword to gird upon his thigh?
Where is the armor and his laurel crown?
For he shall be a conqueror ere he die,
And win him kingdoms wider than his own!
Like the earthquake he shall shake
Cities down, and waste like fire,
Then build them stronger, pile them higher,
When he shall awake.

In the dark spheres of his unclosed eyes
The sheeted lightnings lie, and clouded stars,
That shall glance softly, as in Summer skies,
Or stream o'er thirsty deserts, winged with wars;

For in the pauses of dread hours
He shall fling his arms off,
And, like a reveler, sing and laugh,
And dance in ladies' bowers.

Ofttimes in his midsummer he shall turn
To look upon the dead bloom with weeping eyes;
O'er ashes of frail beauty stand and mourn,
And kiss the bier of stricken hopes with sighs.
Ofttimes, like light of onward seas,
He shall hail great days to come,
Or hear the first dread note of doom
Like torrents on the breeze.

His manhood shall be blissful and sublime,
With stormy sorrows and serenest pleasures,
And his crowned age upon the top of Time
Shall throne him great in glories, rich in treasures.
The sun is up, the day is breaking;
Sing ye sweetly; draw anear;
Immortal be the new-born year,
And blessed be its waking.

Easter Day.

A PATHWAY opens from the tomb,
The grave's a grave no more!
Stoop down; look into that sweet room;
Pass through the unsealed door;
Linger a moment by the bed
Where lay but yesterday the Church's Head.

What is there there to make thee fear?
A folded chamber vest,
Akin to that which thou shalt wear
When for thy slumber drest;
Two gentle angels sitting by—
How sweet a room, methinks, wherein to lie!

No gloomy vault, no charnel cell,
No emblem of decay,
No solemn sound of passing bell,
To say, "He's gone away;"
But angel-whispers soft and clear,
And He, the risen Jesus, standing near.

"Why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?"
'Tis not the gardener's voice,
But His to whom all knees shall bow,
In whom all hearts rejoice;
The voice of Him who yesterday
Within that rock was Death's resistless prey.

"Why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?
The living with the dead?"
Take young Spring flowers and deck thy brow,
For life with joy is wed!
The grave is now the grave no more;
Why fear to pass that bridal chamber door?

Take flowers and strew them all around
The room where Jesus lay!
But softly tread; 'tis hallowed ground,
And this is Easter day;
"The Lord is risen," as he said,
And thou shalt rise with him, thy risen Head.

Our Prayers.

ART Thou not weary of our selfish prayers,
Forever crying, "Help *me!* save *me*, Lord!"
We stay fenced in by petty fears and cares,
Nor hear the song outside, nor join its vast accord.

Is not the need of other souls our need?
After desire the helpful act must go,
As the strong wind bears on the winged seed
To some bare spot of earth, and leaves it there to grow.

Still are we saying, "Teach us how to pray:"
Oh, teach us how to *love*, and then our prayer
Through other lives will find its upward way,
As plants together seek and find sweet life and air.

Transfigured.

ALMOST afraid they led her in:
(A dwarf more piteous none could find)
Withered as some weird leaf, and thin,
The woman was — and wan and blind.

Into his mirror with a smile —
Not vain to be so fair, but glad —
The South-born painter looked the while,
With eyes than Christ's alone less sad.

"Mother of God," in pale surprise
He whispered, "What am I to paint?"
A voice that sounded from the skies
Said to him: "Raphael, a saint."

She sat before him in the sun;
He scarce could look at her, and she
Was still and silent. "It is done,"
He said, "Oh, call the world to see!"

Ah, that was she in veriest truth —
Transcendent face and haloed hair;
The beauty of divinest youth
Divinely beautiful was there.

Herself into her picture passed —
Herself and not her poor disguise
Made up of time and dust. At last
One saw her with the Master's eyes.

Advent.

MY eyes are weary with the long, long watching
That sees the Advent moon grow full and wane;
My straining gaze no gleam of hope is catching,
My breath stands white and stiff against the pane.

I see the snow-wreaths lift among the meadows
Before the wind, like spirits gliding by;
When, when shall I behold the fleeing shadows!
When will the promised daybreak flood the sky?

O watchman! is there yet no sign of glory
To break the darkness of the eastern gate?
No voice that tells again the wonderous story?
For oh, the promised bridegroom tarries late.

The bride stands fainting now before the portal,
Where long her watch and fasting she hath borne;
Will He not come once more with love immortal
To fold her close and bid her cease to mourn?

Will He not whisper words of tender blessing
To bid her aching loneliness be stilled?
Her work and woes and bitter wrongs redressing —
To bid her love and longing all be filled?

O watchman! speed thee up beyond the fountain;
Does nothing promise my impatient sight?
Break through the myrrh-boughs on the sacred mountain,
Gaze up mid-heaven, and speak some sign of light.

The stairs are dark that point toward the morning;
The dove no longer finds the rocky cleft;
No shield against the cold world's cruel scorning
For her, of home and bridegroom both bereft.

And yet her lips are fragrant with the blessing
That soothed the weary and hath warmed the cold;
Her touch still lingers where her hands were pressing
The wounds of them she drew within the fold.

Her work is ready for His dear approving;
Her lamp stands burning with a steady ray;
Will He not answer to her faithful loving,
And bring the darkness into perfect day?

Knowledge and Reverence.

WHO knows too much to wonder and adore,
Knows less, in sooth, than he whose reverent awe
A living Power in breeze and tempest saw,
And heard heaven's anger in the thunder's roar,
Or laugh of naiads on the pebbled shore?
To him for every change a Will was law,
The cloud — black eagle — had lightnings in its claw!
And nymphs dropped rain from brimming urns they bore.
We watch a chemic force in bubbling play,
Till we forget the vital soul within;
We leave no meaning in the new-born-day,
But the dull summons for labor to begin!
Sheer night has star-gleams in its murkiness,
But the moon-dazzled eye is blind with light's excess!

Let me forget, O Heaven, when I behold
Of virgin Dawn the Sun's miraculous birth,
This poor Ixion of mechanic earth
Turning his grinding-wheel to heat and cold,
These orbs and orbits, and the laws that hold
The spinning globes awhirl! if in this dearth
Of reverence I might know, but thus, the worth
Of simple wonder in its Age of Gold!—
How from a vast mysterious abyss
The immense God rose, and from his boundless brow
Flashed morning radiant with the eternities
Of Power and Goodness, bidding nations bow,
And the awed heart to burst in songs of praise,
Unstudied as the hymns the woods and cradles raise!

Ah, me! Less reverence with more light impugns
The law of growth! The enlarging continents
Of knowledge stretch the shore-line that indents
The unknown gulf, and all the mystic runes
Of wonder solved, give rhythms of deeper tunes
And subtler harmony. Splendors more intense,
From gulfs unfathomed by the line of sense,
Rise on the soul, outflashing former noons!
Drooped lids of worship shield the dazzled eyes;
The light behind the sunlight, Power in power,
Grow visible, and skies beyond our skies
Open to depths ineffable in that hour
When Earth's young wonder, love, and reverence meet
The wisdom of her age, in unity complete!

O Tell Me Not of Heavenly Halls.

TELL me not of heavenly halls,
Of streets of pearl and gates of gold,
Where angel unto angel calls
'Mid splendors of the sky untold.

My homesick heart would backward turn
To find this dear, familiar earth,
To watch its sacred hearth-fires burn,
To catch its songs of care and mirth.

I'd lean from out the heavenly choir
To hear once more the red cock crow,
What time the morning's rosy fire
O'er hill and field began to glow.

To hear the ripple of the rain,
The summer waves at ocean's brim,
To hear the sparrow sing again
I'd quit the wide-eyed cherubim!

I care not what heaven's glories are!
Content am I. More joy it brings
To watch the dandelion's star
Than mystic Saturn's golden rings.

And yet, and yet—O dearest one,
My comfort from life's earliest breath,
To follow thee where thou art gone,
Through these dim, awful gates of Death—

To find thee — feel thy smile again,
To have Eternity's long day
To tell my grateful love — why, then,
Both heaven and earth might pass away!

A Christmas Hymn.

TELL me what is this innumerable throng
Singing in the heavens a loud angelic song?
These are they who come with swift and shiny feet
From round about the throne of God the Lord of Light to greet.

Oh, who are these that hasten beneath the starry sky —
As if with joyful tidings that through the world shall fly?
The faithful shepherds, they who greatly were afeared,
When, as they watched their flocks by night, the heavenly host appeared.

Who are these that follow across the hills of night
A star that westward hurries along the fields of light?
Three wise men from the East, who myrrh and treasure bring —
To lay them at the feet of Him, their Lord and Christ and King.

What babe new-born is this that in a manger cries?
Near on her lowly bed his happy mother lies.
Oh, see, the air is shaken with white and heavenly wings —
This is the Lord of all the earth, this is the King of Kings.

Without Me Ye Can Do Nothing.

JESUS, Thou art my guiding star,
For in Thy light alone I see,
And lovelier than the morning are
The sunbeams of Thy love to me;
For Thou hast burst the prison door,
And loosed my spirit from its chain,
And set me 'neath the skies once more—
A free man on a boundless plain.

Thou art the source of every day,
Thou art the bloom of every flower,
Thou art the light of every ray,
Thou art the life of every hour;
Without Thee joy hast lost her charm,
And with Thee grief must lose her sting;
Where Thou art danger cannot harm,
The wilderness itself may sing.

All that is pure, and good, and fair,
Is but a streamlet drawn from Thee;
All that is lovely everywhere
Is but Thyself revealed to me:
The fervor of all hearts that live,
The brightness of all souls that shine,
Give back the light that Thou didst give,
And tell Thee that their light is Thine.

Longing.

OF all the myriad moods of mind
That through the soul come thronging,
Which one was e'er so good, so kind,
So beautiful, as Longing?
The thing we long for, that we are
For one transcendent moment,
Before the Present, poor and bare,
Can make its sneering comment.

Still, through our paltry stir and strife,
Glows down the wished Ideal,
And Longing moulds in clay what Life
Carves in the marble real.
To let the new life in, we know,
Desire must ope the portal;—
Perhaps the longing to be so
Helps make the soul immortal.

Longing is God's fresh heavenward will
With our poor earthly striving;
We quench it, that we may be still
Content with merely living;
But, would we learn that heart's full scope
Which we are hourly wronging,
Our lives must climb from hope to hope
And realize our longing.

Oh! let us hope that to our praise
Good God not only reckons
The moments when we tread His ways,
But when the spirit beckons,—
That some slight good is also wrought
Beyond self-satisfaction,
When we are simply good in thought,
Howe'er we fail in action.

Easter.

"I AM the Resurrection!" Only once
Was heard such words as these.
Thousands of years had men lived on
In pain and ease.

Prophet and priest and sage had told their lore,
But stood with bated breath;
Each owned his wisdom vain before
The Power of Death.

Nothing beyond! Lo! Death subdueth all.
Man rules the world; but he
Must toil and suffer, lay him down,
And cease to be.

"I am the Resurrection!" Earth and sky
A risen Savior sing.
What victory hath the grave to-day,
And Death what sting?

I Cannot Lose.

NOW summer finds her perfect prime,
Sweet blows the wind from western calms,
On every bower red roses climb,
The meadows sleep in mingled balms.
Nor stream nor bank the wayside by,
But lilies float, and daisies throng,
Nor space of blue and sunny sky
That is not cleft with soaring song.
O flowery morns, O tuneful eves,
Fly swift! my soul ye cannot fill!
Bring the ripe fruit, the garnered sheaves,
The drifting snows on plain and hill.
Alike to me fall frosts and dews;
But heaven, O Lord, I cannot lose.

Warm hands to-day are clasped in mine;
Fond hearts my mirth or mourning share;
And, over hope's horizon line,
The future dawns, serenely fair.
Yet still, though fervent vow denies,
I know the rapture will not stay;
Some wind of grief or doubt will rise,
And turn my rosy sky to gray.
I shall awake in rainy morn
To find my hearth left lone and drear;

Thus, half in sadness, half in scorn,
I let my life burn on as clear,
Though friends grow cold, or fond love woos;
But heaven, O Lord, I cannot lose.

In golden hours, the angel Peace
Comes down and broods me with her wings,
I gain from sorrow sweet release,
I mate me with divinest things;
When shapes of guilt and gloom arise,
And far the radiant angel flees,
My song is lost in mournful sighs,
My wine of triumph left but lees.
In vain for me her pinions shine,
And pure, celestial days begin;
Earth's passion-flowers I still must twine,
Nor braid one beauteous lily in.
Ah, is it good or ill I choose?
But heaven, O Lord, I cannot lose.

So wait I. Every day that dies
With flush and fragrance born of June,
I know shall more resplendent rise,
Where is no need of sun nor moon.
And every bud on love's low tree,
Whose mocking crimson flames and falls,
In fullest flower I yet shall see,
High blooming by the jasper walls.
Nay, every sin that dims my days,
And wild regrets that veil the sun,

Shall fade before those dazzling rays,
And my long glory be begun.
Let the years come to bless or bruise,
Thy heaven, O Lord, I shall not lose.

Oh Jesus, Pity Me.

GRACIOUS Christ! I come to thee
For pardon, peace and purity.
I cannot bide my exile longer;
The yearning of my heart grows stronger
Thy gentle face to see.
O Jesus, pity me!

O blessed Christ! I come to thee
To hide me from life's vanity.
I have no offering but my weakness,
Share me thy strength; teach me thy meekness.
In my extremity,
O Jesus, pity me!

O patient Christ! I lift to thee
The cry of helpless poverty.
Hands that have faltered in the gleaning
I hold to ask thee for the screening
Of thy divinity.
O Jesus, pity me!

Forgiveness.

BLEST Master, how exceeding broad,
How deep thy pure command,
That lays upon earth's fevered pulse
A calm, restraining hand.

It turns the tide of passion back,
It bids revenge be still;
For e'en the wrath of man restrained
Shall execute thy will.

Tho' mocked and pierced thou bidst us pray,
Forgive, and bless, and love,
As children of eternal day
Whose life is hid above.

O pierced hands! O pierced heart!
O Man of Sorrow deep!
Unto our wounded souls impart
Thy love, thy spirit meek.

Then shall we calmly trust and wait,
And pray for friend and foe,
Until we stand at heaven's bright gate
In garments white as snow.

The daily round, the trivial task,
Should give us all we ought to ask—
Room to deny ourselves; a road
To lead us daily nearer God.

Going Home.

KISS me when my spirit flies—
Let the beauty of your eyes
Beam along the waves of death,
While I draw my parting breath,
And am borne to yonder shore
Where the billows beat no more,
And the notes of endless spring
Through the groves immortal ring.

I am going home to-night,
Out of blindness into sight,
Out of weakness, war, and pain
Into power, peace, and gain;
Out of winter, gale, and gloom
Into summer breath and bloom;
From the wand'rings of the past
I am going home at last.

Kiss my lips and let me go—
Nearer swells the solemn flow
Of the wond'rous stream that rolls
By the border-land of souls—
I can catch sweet strains of songs
Floating down from distant throngs,
And can feel the touch of hands
Reaching out from angel bands.

Anger's frown and envy's thrust,
Friendship chilled by cold distrust,
Sleepless night and weary morn,
Toil in fruitless land forlorn,
Aching head and breaking heart,
Love destroyed by slander's dart,
Drifting ship and darkened sea,
Over there will righted be.

Sing in numbers low and sweet,
Let the songs of two worlds meet—
We shall not be sundered long—
Like the fragment of a song,
Like the branches of a rill,
Parted by the rock or hill,
We shall blend in tune and time,
Loving on in perfect rhyme.

When the noon-tide of your days
Yields to twilight's silver haze,
Ere the world recedes in space,
Heavenward lift your tender face,
Let your dear eyes homeward shine,
Let your spirit call for mine,
And my own will answer you
From the deep and boundless blue.

Swifter than the sunbeam's flight
I will cleave the gloom of night,
And will guide you to the land
Where our loved ones waiting stand,

And the legions of the blest,
They shall welcome you to rest —
They will know you when your eyes
On the isles of glory rise.

When the parted streams of life
Join beyond all jarring strife,
And the flowers that withered lay
Blossom in immortal May —
When the voices hushed and dear
Thrill once more the raptured ear,
We shall feel and know and see
God knew better far than we.

The Holy Spirit.

I SAW a man of God-like form
Bend like a slender reed
Before a sudden Summer storm
A girl would scarcely heed.
I saw a frail and tender child
Perform a hero's part,
And face a wolf with hunger wild,
And strike him to the heart.

What is this mystic force? I cried,
The secret of this power?
What makes this youth, so free from pride,
The monarch of the hour?

The answer came in trumpet tone,
"Mysterious are His ways;
In weakness is His glory shown,
And babes proclaim His praise.

"When to the first disciples' hearts
The Holy spirit came,
It thrilled them to the lowest parts,
Through heart, and soul, and frame.
They who were wont with craven souls
In secret nooks to hide,
Hark, from their lips what thunder rolls
For Jesus crucified!

"Thus is it yet, ay, even now,
That souls are sanctified;
The tender air, the lighted brow,
No humble garb can hide.
God's Spirit makes the weakest strong,
The coward true and brave,
And bears his chosen ones along,
Triumphant o'er the grave."

Thinking and Working.

OH, let your ceaseless thinking go,
Your thoughts are vain;
The bright brooks through the meadows flow,
Seeking the main,
And have no care. The April rains
Their green banks fill
And on they go, nor count their gains,
Yet warble still.

The bees go wandering here and there,
They have no lore;
If flowers are sweet, what do they care?
The fields have store
Of budding clover; yet this one
Sweet daffodil
Makes them content, while in the sun
They hum on still.

This robin, gleaning here a straw
And there a thread,
Builds her small nest — no thought of law
Troubles her head.
The bough whereon she builds is green;
She sees her mate
Go singing through the morning sheen,
And loss comes late.

The rose-tree gathers rain and light
And shapes its flower;
It drinks the crystal dew at night,
And, hour by hour,
It greens and grows, it knows not why;
Nor does it care
That you, so thoughtful, passing by,
Pronounce it fair.

The tender grass beneath your foot
Takes not a thought
Of how it strikes persistent root,
And murmurs not
Under your crushing step at morn,
But still looks up,
Nor grieves that brighter tints adorn
The lily's cup.

Oh, put your foolish fancies by,
It matters not;
Be sure how deep you delve, how high
May mount your thought;
The stars will shine above your head,
The flowers will bloom,
The fatal thunder-cloud will shed
Its bolts of doom.

The whether you shall think or no,
God writes his will
Plainly on human hearts, that so,
While singing still,

We may not leave our work. He gives
A subtile sense
To every trustful soul that lives,
That, working hence,

It may not make mistake. What needs
The childlike soul
To know where all your questioning leads?
The wondrous whole
Is hidden from your searching ken;
But let it be,
God tells that to the hearts of men
They fail to see.

Be still, and listen in your soul
Where God shall speak;
Above your head the thunders roll
And you are weak;
But so are grasses, yet they grow
Greener for showers;
The end of toil we need not know—
The task is ours.

Sometimes a hero prostrate lies—
Ah, well, what then?
We only know the spirit dies
From sight of men.
We know not what there is to do
Some otherwhere;
What realms to rule, what service new
Demands his care.

Then rest from questions and from doubt;
Work as you will,
But leave your selfish murmurings out,
And listen still
To hear the voice that will not cease
Forevermore —
God's voice within that speaketh peace
Beyond all lore.

Ah, if thy fate, with anguish fraught,
Should be to wet the dusty soil
With the hot, burning tears of toil,
To struggle with imperious thought
Till the overburdened brain,
Heavy with labor, faint with pain,
Like a jarred pendulum, retain
Only its emotion, not its power;
Remember in that perilous hour,
When most afflicted and opprest,
From labor there shall come forth rest.

Repentance.

IF the Lord were to send down blessings from heaven as thick
and as fast as the fall
Of the drops of rain or the flakes of snow, I'd love Him and
thank Him for all;
But the gift that I'd crave, and the gift that I'd keep, if I'd only
one to choose,
Is the gift of a broken and contrite heart,—and that He will not
refuse.

For what is my wish and what is my hope, when I've toiled and
prayed and striven,
All the days that I live upon earth? It is this—to be forgiven.
And what is my wish and what is my hope, but to end where I
begin,
With an eye that looks to my Saviour, and a heart that mourns
for its sin!

Well, perhaps you think I am going to say I'm the chief of sin-
ners; and then
You'll tell me, as far as you can see, I'm no worse than other men.
I've little to do with better or worse—I haven't to judge the rest;
If other men are no better than I, they are bad enough at the best.

I've nothing to do with other folks; it isn't for me to say
What sort of men the Scribes might be, or the Pharisees in their
day;

But we know that it wasn't for such as they that the kingdom of heaven was meant;
And we're told we shall likewise perish unless we do repent.

And what have I done, perhaps you'll say, that I should fret and grieve?
I didn't wrangle, nor curse, nor swear; I didn't lie nor thieve;
I'm clear of cheating and drinking and debt.—Well, perhaps, but I cannot say;
For some of these I hadn't a mind, and some didn't come in my way.

For there's many a thing I could wish undone, though the law might not be broken;
And there's many a word, now I come to think, that I could wish unspoken.
I did what I thought to be the best, and I said just what came to my mind;
I wasn't so honest that I could boast, and I'm sure that I wasn't kind.

Well, come to things that I might have done, and then there'll be more to say;
We'll ask for the broken hearts I healed, and the tears that I wiped away.
I thought for myself and I wrought for myself—for myself, and none beside:
Just as if Jesus had never lived, as if He had never died.

But since my Lord has looked on me, and since He has bid me look
Once on my heart and once on my life and once on His blessed Book,

And once on the cross where He died for me, He has taught me
that I must mend,
If I'd have Him to be my Saviour, and keep Him to be my Friend.

Since He's taken this long account of mine and has crossed it
through and through,
Though He's left me nothing at all to pay, he has given me
enough to do;
He has taught me things that I never knew, with all my worry
and care,—
Things that have brought me down to my knees, and things that
will keep me there.

He has shown me the law that works in him and the law that
works in me,—
Life unto life and death unto death,—and has asked how these
agree;
He has made me weary of self and of pelf; yes, my Saviour has
bid me grieve
For the days and years when I didn't pray, when I didn't love
nor believe.

Since he's taken this cold, dark heart of mine, and has pierced it
through and through,
He has made me mourn both for things I did and for things that
I didn't do;
And what is my wish and what is my thought, but to end where
I begin,
With an eye that looks to my Saviour, and a heart that mourns
for its sin!

The Prompter.

LAST night my heart was sad. The day had been
Oppressive with its burning heat, and weary,
From my close room I looked and longed for night,
Which came at last with visage dark and dreary.

The sweet blue heavens, hung thick with murky clouds,
Seemed like a mourner o'er the still earth bending,
And the low sobbings of the wandering wind
With fitful patterings of rain were blending.

Life took its hue from nature; and in vain
Backward I looked through labyrinths dim and hoary,
For one brief hour of calm, unruffled peace;
One ray of bright, untarnished earthly glory.

Transient as morning mist! along my path,
Like frowning sentinels, cold head-stones gleaming,
Told where a little dust, a few crushed flowers,
Were shrined memorials of earth's proudest seeming.

The present! how I turned it o'er and o'er,
The shadows of a sick-room round me lying,
Hopeless of health — life lingering on and on,
To be perhaps long, weary years in dying.

God's angel came at length, and each lone thought,
Oblivious alike of blight or blessing,
Sank down to rest like an o'erwearied child,
Infolded in the arms of soft caressing.

Dreams came and went: grim midnight held the hour
For ghostly revelry! wakened with sadness
I peered into its depths. High over all
One star its watch-fire kept of hope and gladness.

Then I remembered how in greatest need
The All-Father sees, and, pitying, sends an angel
To spread green mosses o'er our thorniest paths,
Or cheer our faint hearts with some blest evangel.

Prompted to better thoughts, my murmuring heart,
Shamed and rebuked, put by its faithless sorrow,
And gathered strength to drink life's cup to-day,
And trust Him for the ingredients of to-morrow.

The Iceberg.

AN iceberg drifting in the polar seas
Braces its cold, and bold, and glistening front
Against the sharpness of the Arctic blasts;
But when it idly floats by southern shores,
Where mild sunshine wakes the praise of Spring,
Warm airs embrace the rugged stranger round,
And melt away its angles with their breath:
The tepid waves caress it, and the light
Nestles among its many crevices,
Till it relents, and in a veil of mist
Withdrawing, sinks, and weeps itself away
Upon the bosom of the summer sea.
And so, when argument, reproach and force
Are spent in vain, the hard heart yields to love.

Faith in Jesus.

WHEN my faith lays hold of Jesus,
With confiding trust in Him,
He my groaning heart releases,
From the guilt and power of sin.

When my faith lays hold of Jesus,
Waiting long with anxious fears,
And my trembling soul approaches
Calvary, He dries my tears.

When my faith lays hold of Jesus,
Then His righteousness is mine;
For He died the death to save us,
Give us peace and life divine.

Yes, when faith laid hold on Jesus,
Then came with it life and joy,
And the song of love He teaches,
Does my heart and tongue employ.

As my heart lays hold of Jesus,
I am justified by faith,
For His blood avails and cleanses,—
Life springs freely from His death.

Pure.

THERE'S a mist, or a dust, or a poisonous breath,
Or a vapor of death
Suspended in every air.
It may blow o'er the mountain or hang o'er the heath,
It may sweep o'er the ocean's wide main,
It may babble through fountain, lie pent up beneath,
Or parch o'er the dry, arid plain;
It may drop its pearls on the bergs of the poles,
It may float with the lightning's home,
It may crystal the clouds to the whitest snows,
Or sift through the high dashing foam.
In valleys deep
Where breezes sleep,
It may balm its invisible breath,
But 'twill bear on its bosom, wherever it flows,
A mist, or a dust, or a vapor of death.

There are waters that melt from the mountain's crest
And its icy breast,
That limpidly trickle below;
There is many a fount at the foot of the hill
That with sparkling leaps into the day,
Or leaving the mount as a silent rill,
Pebbly, merrily, murmurs away;
There are glassy smooth lakes whose crystalline depths
Reveal pearls and mirror the sky;

There are billowy waves that wash the shores of the sea
To be drawn to the clouds on high;
There are dewy pearls
In the leafy curls,
That tremble in the morning sun,
But every drop, wherever it be,
Has passed o'er the dead and impurity won.

But I think of a land, O that beautiful land!
And a golden strand,
Where all that is there shall be pure.
The air of that clime shall be fresh, every breath,
And streams, crystal, pure evermore.
Naught belonging to time, no tincture of death
Can breathe o'er that mystical shore.
These impure hearts, endless fountains of woe
That weary us so in the soul
And give us no rest, shall be evermore pure
While ages unlimited roll.
O ravishing thought!
With the invisible fraught—
To be holy and pure, through the death of the Son,
In the presence of Him to whom the stars are not pure,
And forever with both to be one.

He Leadeth Me.

IN pastures green? Not always; sometimes He,
Who knoweth best, in kindness leadeth me
In weary ways, where heavy shadows be.

Out of the sunshine, warm and soft and bright,
Out of the sunshine into darkest night,
I oft would faint with sorrow and affright.

Only for this—I know He holds my hand;
So whether in green or desert land
I trust, altho' I may not understand.

And by still waters? No, not always so;
Ofttimes the heavy tempests round me blow,
And o'er my soul the waves and billows go.

But when the storms beat loudest, and I cry
Aloud for help, the Master standeth by,
And whispers to my soul "Lo, it is I."

Above the tempest wild I hear him say,
"Beyond this darkness lies the perfect day;
In every path of thine I lead the way."

So whether on the hilltop high and fair
I dwell, or in the sunshine valleys, where
The shadows lie—what matter? He is there

And more than this: where'er the pathway lead
He gives no helpless, broken reed,
But His own hand, sufficient for my need.

So where He leads me I can safely go;
And in the blest hereafter I shall know
Why in His wisdom He hath led me so,

* * * * * *

Only a Woman.

ONLY a woman, shriveled and old!
The prey of the winds and the prey of the cold!
Cheeks that are shrunken,
Eyes that are sunken,
Lips that were never o'erbold.
Only a woman, forsaken and poor,
Asking an alms at the bronze church-door.

Hark to the organ! roll upon roll
The waves of its music go over her soul!
Silks rustle past her
Thicker and faster —
The great bell ceases its toll.
Fain would she enter, but not for the poor
Swingeth wide open the bronze church-door.

Only a woman, waiting alone,
Icily cold on an ice cold throne.
What do they care for her?
Mumbling a prayer for her—

Giving not bread but a stone.
Under rich laces their haughty hearts beat,
Mocking the woes of their kin in the street.

Only a woman. In the old days
Hope caroled to her her happiest lays;
Somebody missed her;
Somebody kissed her;
Somebody crowned her with praise;
Somebody faced up the battle of life
Strong for her sake who was mother or wife.

Somebody lies with a tress of her hair
Light on his heart, where the death-shadows are;
Somebody waits for her,
Opening the gates for her,
Giving delight for despair;
Only a woman — nevermore poor —
Dead in the snow at the bronze church-door!

Death's Miniature.

GONE but an hour! and yet beyond my reach
As much as are the dead;
Nor all the passion of imploring speech
Restores the presence fled.

The room is just as empty as if God
Had sent the form to rest;
The silence were no deeper, if the sod
Lay over that fair breast.

I try to fancy where she is just now,
And that she thinks with me;
Yes, I believe it, for I own her vow,
But oh! for certainty.

This somber hush, this wonder how and where
My living friend now is,
Are like the features Death himself doth wear,
These lineaments are his.

This Absence is the miniature of Death,
A perfect likeness, too,
So that I seem to feel his very breath
Chilling me through and through.

But though he sat for this dark picture here,
Ah, what a dread surprise,
If he himself should suddenly draw near,
Should now confront mine eyes.

By laying here the absent one I wait,
To whose warm love I cling,
In all his majesty of marble state,
A white and soulless thing!

Good God! let all thy mercy intervene
When we must come to know,
The awful difference that lies between
The real and pictured Woe!

Evening Prayer.

ONCE more to yonder peaceful starlit sky,
We lift our hearts from out this vale of tears;
O Father, deign to hear us where we lie,
And with thy love disperse our doubts and fears.

It is the same sad story as of old,
Of unfought battles, or if fought, unwon;
The same forgiveness asked for dark-browed sins,
Which ate our lives out in the days agone.

For worship of the creature more than God,
For passing by our neighbor in his need,
That, though we honor Jesus with our lips,
We seldom follow where his hand would lead.

Yet pity, Father! from thy throne on high
Lean loving down to meet our broken prayer;
And may we feel a blessing touch our brows,
In the light breathings of the evening air!

Labor and Trust.

WEARILY I sit and weave
The tangled web of life.
The pattern which my hands have wrought
Is but a bit of color fraught
With daily, hourly strife.

Longingly I seek to trace
The inwove threads I span;
To know how this and that unite,
For bringing forth the figures bright
That form the perfect plan.

Rapidly the shuttle flies
When heart and hope are mine;
When on the loom the sunlight pours,
The flecks of gold like summer flowers
In wondrous beauty shine.

Gloomily the fingers move,
Dark tinted is the work,
When 'mong the threads an evil knot,—
Envy and malice,—love forgot,
Doth unexpected lurk.

Patiently, with bowed head,
I weave in sorrow's day,
Scarce can I tell what threads I hold,
I only know that grief untold
Hides all but sodden gray.

Trustfully I sit and weave;
I know 'tis mine to do
That which he gives into my hands,
Complete in him who wisely planned
Shall be the pattern true.

"Tender and True."

I KNOW, dearest Lord, though the anguish is keen,
What all these sore wounds from thy loving hands mean,
Till smitten and stripped, I made creatures my stay,
And my love from my Maker turned coldly away.
But "the heart that I fashioned," thou sayest "must be mine;
Must all other lovers — all idols resign.
Nor other can love thee, my child, as I love —
O cease the weak hearts of thy fellows to prove.
No comfort nor peace wilt thou find save in me;
To shelters that fail thee why, why wilt thou flee?
Mine eye is upon thee; I feel for thy woe;
The secret distress of thy spirit I know —
How hunted, and wounded, and cheated thou art,
And I pity each pang of thy suffering heart.
And mine is compassion that never will fail,
While any are left that are sinful and frail.
Then lean not, my child, on the reeds that will break;
Haste hither to One that will never forsake.
As long as thy sins and thy sorrows endure
The pity and help of thy Maker is sure."
O, Lord, dearest Lord, o'er the waste, howling wild,
Reach out thy strong hand and lead homeward thy child.

God is for the Right.

YES, God is for the right,
However man go wrong;
The race he gives not to the swift,
Nor battle to the strong.
It matters not how weak the cause
If holy in his sight;
'Twill be victorious soon or late,
For God will aid the right.

Our country's star of fate
By clouds is overcast,
And dark oppression, wrong and hate
Drives on to ruin fast;
Yet wherefore grieve? In his good time
He will arise in might,
And bid the angry conflict cease,
And triumph with the right.

So, brother, let us hope,
Though evil be the hour,
And we are grouped on ruin's brink,—
Bereft of earthly power.
Our God will do the best for all,
For all, both dark and white;
And though the Union rise or fall,
He will defend the right.

Follow Thou Me.

HAVE ye looked for sheep in the desert,
For those who have missed their way?
Have ye been in the wild waste places,
Where the lost and wandering stray?
Have ye trodden the lonely highway,
The foul and darksome street?
It may be ye'd see in the gloaming
The print of my wounded feet.

Have ye folded home to your bosom
The trembling, neglected lamb,
And taught to the little lost one
The sound of the Shepherd's name?
Have ye searched for the poor and needy,
With no clothing, no home, no bread?
The Son of Man was among them,
He had nowhere to lay his head!

Have ye carried the living water
To the parched and thirsty soul?
Have ye said to the sick and wounded,
"Christ Jesus makes thee whole"?
Have ye told My fainting children
Of the strength of the Father's hand?
Have ye guided the tottering footsteps
To the shores of the "golden land"?

Have ye stood by the sad and weary,
To smooth the pillow of death,
To comfort the sorrow-stricken,
And strengthen the feeble faith?
And have ye felt, when the glory
Has streamed through the open door,
And flitted across the shadows,
That I had been there before?

Have ye wept with the broken-hearted
In their agony of woe?
Ye might hear Me whisp'ring beside you,
'Tis a pathway I often go!
My disciples, My brethren, My friends,
Can ye dare to follow Me?
Then, wherever the Master dwelleth,
There shall the servant be!

My Three Homes.

FAR away amid the mountains, stands a cottage small and brown,
Where the sunlight loves to linger on the roof with moss o'ergrown;
Where the shadows fall so gently, and the twilight gathers deep,
Folding cottage, stream and mountain in a calm and holy sleep.

O, I love the pleasant visions that in mem'ry come to me,
For I've treasured up a picture of each hill, and rock, and tree;
And to-night the sound of voices falls upon my ear again,
And I catch the distant music of some old, familiar strain.

But 'tis strange! no childish laughter 'mid the old woods echoes now,
While my mother's step is feeble, and deep lines are on her brow.
And the dark-brown locks I parted from my father's brow of yore,
Have grown thin from many winters, and are thickly silvered o'er.

Ah, how light and shade are blending in the picture, as I gaze
Backward down life's changing vista to the scenes of early days!
But a long, wide way divides us, and long years I know may come,
Ere life's journey brings my footsteps to the dear old childhood's home.

Where the grand old prairies widen, and the wild flowers open fair,
There is many a home of beauty, and my own is nestling there;
It is not the home of childhood, not a semblance can I trace
Of the mountain, rock, or wild-wood, near the old familiar place.

But my life has grown more gladsome and a deeper joy I've known,
Since another tie is added, and my heart is not alone.
There's new beauty in the landscape, softer music in the breeze,
For the brightness of affection helps the soul to garner these.

And now my blue-eyed baby like a bud of promise rare
Wakes new beauty in life's garden where before 'twas passing fair;
And I love to think the sunshine lighting up her golden head,
Is an emblem of the brightness that shall on her path be shed.

As I sit amid my treasures, and recall the buried years,
Giving now a smile of gladness, bathing oft some scene in tears —
How my heart in fondness lingers where such blessed mem'ries come,
Round the fireside and the altar, where I knelt so oft at home.

O, I love to trace the record I have kept in mem'ry long,
And to scan the treasured pictures that in all her chambers throng.
Yet they tell me all is fading — friends my heart holds dear to-day
May, to-morrow, glide in silence to those dim old halls away.

Ah, we've no abiding city, we are seeking one to come,
Where a house by hands not builded is our everlasting home;
Where no night of sorrow darkens, and no eye is dim with tears,
For a glory and a gladness marks the bright, unchanging years.

There, when all life's scenes are o'er, may the circle loved below,
In the olden home of childhood, and the home so precious now,
With unbroken links be gathered where no bitter partings come,
And our earthly ties be strengthened in that brighter, better home.

Over the River.

VER the river they beckon to me,
Loved ones who've crossed to the farther side,
The gleam of their snowy robes I see,
But their voices are lost in the dashing tide.
There's one with ringlets of sunny gold,
And eyes the reflection of heaven's own blue;
He crossed in the twilight gray and cold,
And the pale mist hid him from mortal view.
We saw not the angels who met him there,
The gates of the city we could not see:
Over the river, over the river,
My brother stands waiting to welcome me.

Over the river the boatman pale
Carried another, the household pet;
Her brown curls waved in the gentle gale,
Darling Minnie! I see her yet.
She crossed on her bosom her dimpled hands,
And fearlessly entered the phantom bark;
We felt it glide from the silver sands,
And all our sunshine grew strangely dark;
We know she is safe on the farther side,
Where all the ransomed and angels be:
Over the river, the mystic river,
My childood's idol is waiting for me.

For none return from those quiet shores
Who cross with the boatman cold and pale;
We hear the dip of the golden oars,
And catch a gleam of the snowy sail;
And lo! they have passed from our yearning heart,
They cross the stream and are gone for aye;
We may not sunder the veil apart
That hides from our vision the gates of day;
We only know that their barks no more
May sail with us o'er life's stormy sea;
Yet somewhere, I know, on the unseen shore,
They watch, and beckon, and wait for me.

And I sit and think, when the sunset's gold
Is flushing river and hill and shore,
I shall one day stand by the water cold,
And list for the sound of the boatman's oar.
I shall watch for a gleam of the flapping sail,
I shall hear the boat as it gains the strand,
I shall pass from sight with the boatman pale
To the better shore of the spirit-land.
I shall know the loved who have gone before,
And joyfully sweet will the meeting be,
When over the river, the peaceful river,
The angel of death shall carry me.

Inconstancy.

I LAY in the shade of an elm one day
And watched the young south winds as they
Courted and kissed a rose of May
Which grew at my side,
Fairer than any human bride.

So soft and sweet was their tone of love
It seemed like music from above,
Or the voice of a distant dove
In some solitude
Cooing over her infant brood.

The face of the rose took a deeper hue
As the young winds, whispering, nearer drew,
With vows and a pledge untrue:
"Witness, thou sun,
That we, the rose and the winds, are one."

I lay in the shade of the elm again
Ere the moon of the month began to wane,
But I looked for the rose in vain—
Neglected and dead
Were its petals pale in their bridal bed.

And the winds as they hoarsely hurried by
Had not for the lost a single sigh;
How much like cruel man, thought I—
Love's sweetest breath
He changes oft to the blast of death.

Wait.

WAIT is a weary word.
How often we wait till all is gone,
Till the joys we wait to clasp are flown,
Till our hopes are dead in their beautiful bloom,
And we sit and sigh above their tomb!
Wait is a weary word.

Wait is a sorrowful word.
How often we wait till life is drear,
Bereft of the ties that make it dear,
Till the hands are cold that we wait to grasp,
Till the forms are laid low that we wait to clasp,
Till the lips are mute that wait to kiss,
And this beautiful world is robbed of bliss!
Wait is a sorrowful word.

Wait is a lonely word.
How often we turn from the fireside warm
And gaze out into the night and storm,
Waiting in vain for coming feet,
Yearning in vain for a greeting sweet,
While the feet are at rest and the form is low
On the battle-sod beneath the snow!
Wait is a lonely word.

Wait is a pitiful word.
I have seen a child with tearful eye
Waiting in hope of the "by and by";
I have seen it sob when it waited in vain,
And I've thought how often with anxious brain
We "children of larger growth" must wait
For the promised joys that come too late;
Wait is a pitiful word.

Wait is a fatal word.
There are hearts that have waited in vain, in vain
For a dear one's smile to return again,
Too proud to be humble and say forgive,
When that word alone could make them live;
Waiting to see the storm sweep past,
And the sun of affection return at last;
Wait is a fatal word.

Wait is a deathful word.
How many a soul has wrecked its peace,
And rashly lost a heaven of bliss,
By waiting a "more convenient" time
To seek reprieve for folly and crime,
By bidding the spirit, "Go thy way,
I will attend thee another day!"
Wait is a deathful word.

Wait! O, the fearful word!
The reef where a thousand hopes are wrecked,
Where a thousand bright careers are checked.

Where hearts and lives are robbed of bliss,
Where joy is turned into wretchedness,
Where a thousand lives that might be grand
Lie wrecked and useless upon the strand;
Father in heaven, may I never wait
Till the work of my life is begun too late!
Wait! 'tis a fearful word!

Dear Savior of a Dying World.

DEAR Savior of a dying world,
Where grief and change must be,
In the new grave where thou wast laid,
My heart lies down with thee:
O, not in cold despair of joy,
Or weariness of pain,
But from a hope that shall not die,
To rise and live again.

I would arise in all thy strength,
Thy place on earth to fill;
To work out all my time of war
With love's unflinching will;
Firm against every doubt of thee
For all my future way—
To walk in Heaven's eternal light
Throughout the changing day.

Ah, such a day as thou shalt own
When suns have ceased to shine!

A day of burdens borne by thee,
And work that all was thine.
Speed thy bright rising in my heart,
Thy righteous kingdom speed —
Till my whole life in concord say,
"The Lord is risen indeed!"

O for an impulse from thy love,
With every coming breath,
To sing that sweet undying song
Amid the wrecks of death!
A "hail!" to every mortal pang
That bids me take my right
To glory in the blessed life
Which thou hast brought to light.

I long to see the hallowed earth
In new creation rise;
To find the germs of Eden hid
Where its fallen beauty lies;
To feel the spring-tide of the soul
By one deep love set free;
Made meet to lay aside her dust,
And be at home with thee.

And then — there shall be yet an end —
An end how full to bless!
How dear to those who watch for thee
With human tenderness!
Then shall the saying come to pass
That makes our home complete,

And, rising from the conquered grave,
Thy parted ones shall meet.

Yes — they shall meet, and face to face
By heart to heart be known,
Clothed with thy likeness, Lord of life,
And perfect in their own.
For this corruptible must rise
From its corruption free,
And this frail mortal must put on
Thine immortality.

Shine then, thou Resurrection Light,
Upon our sorrows shine;
The fullness of thy joys be ours,
As all our griefs were thine.
Now, in this changing, dying life,
Our faded hopes restore,
Till, in thy triumph perfected,
We taste of death no more.

The Real.

WHEN this little life is over,
When the short day finds its close,
And the weary body sleepeth
In its last profound repose,
How will seem the tiny sorrows
That oppressed our being here?
How will look the trivial interests
Now so precious and so dear?

Standing where the life eternal
Reaches endlessly away,
Where no short-lived human anguish
Clouds the ever-shining day,
How will seem the petty struggles,
Follies, rivalries of earth?
How will look the vain ambitions
Even now so little worth?

Listening to the strain harmonious
That shall never, never end,
How will seem the causeless discords
That here parted friend from friend!
Gazing on the wondrous glory
Filling all the courts of heaven,
How will look the empty tinsel
For which countless souls are given?

Much of love, and truth, and kindness,
Here is hidden from our sight,
But all goodness will be garnered
In "the world that makes this right."
Wait we yet a little moment,
Seek we meekly to endure,
For the end is just before us,
And the recompense is sure.

Fight on, Brave Heart, Fight on.

FIGHT onward to the breach, brave heart,
When victory o'er life is won!
To mourn is but the coward's part—
Thou hast the warrior's now begun;
Pour out thy last, best, ruddiest drop;
But till thy wild pulsation stop,
Fight on, brave heart, fight on!

The knight of old sought Christ's dear grave,
When joy from earthly home had gone;
For this he dared the wintry wave,
And roamed o'er burning waste alone;
Make then a wiser pilgrimage
To thine own grave, in youth or age;
Fight on, brave heart, fight on!

Dreams of Heaven.

"I veil my brow from this dim earth,
And dream of brighter spheres."

[Passage marked by a dear friend, now a dweller in those brighter spheres.]

"To suns that shine forever yonder,
O'er fields that fade not sweet to flee,
The very winds that there may wander,
How healing must their breathing be!"

SCHILLER.

I DREAM of a land of flowers unfading
Which bloom afresh through the vernal year;
Of ever-green trees forever shading
The streams of crystal, bright and clear;
Where crimson cloud-tints deck the morning,
And rainbow colors light up the eve,
Only to give up their rich adorning,
And round our spirits their bright woof weave.

I dream of a home where pain and sighing,
Where sin and sorrow are never known,
Where the heart's dear idols, dead and dying,
Can never leave us, alone, alone!
Where harsh, cold words can never grieve us,
Sending a chill to the heart's warm tide,
Where those we trust so will ne'er deceive us,
But will roam eternally by our side.

I dream of meetings of friends long parted,—
Of meetings undimmed by a single fear,
Which will heal the woes of the broken-hearted,
And dry forever the mourner's tear;
Where the brows we love so will never quiver,
Or the fond eyes dim in a dark eclipse,—
And the heart and the soul will never shiver
To feel how cold are a dear one's lips!

O, friend of my heart! in a brighter morning
Do you roam so happy, among the flowers?
Do you wreathe your brows in their rich adorning,
And never long for this home of ours?
Do you wish for the friends you left behind you,
Or send sweet thoughts to the loved of yore?
Do the asphodel flowers of heaven remind you
Of flowers you loved on our time-washed shore?

She answers me not — my friend and sister!
Never on earth shall I hear her voice;
But a soft breath comes through the dark cloud-vista,
And her spirit whispers to mine, "Rejoice!
In a few short years, o'er the silent river,
(Short indeed they will seem to be,)
A sudden pang and a tremulous shiver,
And forever free you will dwell with me."

O fadeless flowers of the fields of heaven!
O ever-green trees of the changeless hills!
O rainbow clouds to the bright skies given!
O crystal rivers and purling rills!

O friendships pure! O loves unfading!
I dream of you all when my dark days come;
And when the black waters my eyes are shading,
May your bright forms smile me a welcome home!

The Silent Village.

A LITTLE way from the busy town,
Beyond the noise of men,
Whence, through waving branches looking down,
The burning crowd is seen;
And where all the surge of life's unrest
To whispered murmurs dies,
On the peaceful hill-side's quiet breast
A silent village lies.

The summer wind with the whispering leaves
And waving grasses plays,
And the wintry blast through shivering trees
And lonely pathways raves,
And the storm, with great gray wings of gloom,
Unfelt, unheeded, comes,
And it stirs no sign and wakes no sound
Within these silent homes.

The tuneful bird pours its joyous note,
And sings its glad, sweet lay,
And the butterfly and hum-bee float
Through all the Summer day;

And the faint, low sound of busy life
Creeps on the evening air
From the town, with restless billows rife,
But still 'tis silent there.

The blushing rose her sweet bloom unfolds,
The daisies gem the ground,
And the buttercup's bright crown of gold
Gleams o'er each grassy mound;
And the fragrant store of clover sweets
With violet perfume blends,
But the loveliness no glad voice greets,
Or the deep silence rends.

The restless feet and the merry shout
Of childhood there are still;
And the song of youth ne'er ringeth out
From these still, quiet fields,
And the busy hands on this life's stage,
Crossed on the peaceful breast,
And the tottering steps of hoary age,
All there in silence rest.

The marble slab and the turfy mound
Point where they're peaceful laid,
And the gleaming shaft and moss-grown stone
Mark the same lowly bed;
For the rich and poor, there side by side,
In narrow mansions sleep,
And no dream of care, or pomp, or pride,
Breaks on their silence deep.

A deep, dark spell, through all time which lasts,
Of mystery unknown,
From the King of Silence' shadow cast,
Over the place is thrown;
But a mightier power shall break the spell,
And these still forms shall wake,
When the trumpet of God's resounding peal
Shall on their silence break.

Lamentation.

I READ upon that book,
Which down the golden gulf doth let us look
On the sweet days of pastoral majesty;
I read upon that book
How, when the shepherd prince did flee,—
Red Esau's twin,—he desolate took
The stone for a pillow; then he fell on sleep.
And lo! there was a ladder. Lo! there hung
A ladder from the star-place, and it clung
To the earth: it tied her so to heaven; and O!
There fluttered wings;
Then were ascending and descending things
That stepped to him where he lay low;
Then up the ladder would a-drifting go—
This feathered brood of heaven—and show
Small as white flakes in winter that are blown
Together, underneath the great white throne.

When I had shut the book, I said
"Now, as for me, my dreams upon my bed
Are not like Jacob's dream;
Yet I have got it in my life; yes, I,
And many more: it doth not us beseem,
Therefore, to sigh.
Is there not hung a ladder in our sky?
Yea; and, moreover, all the way up on high
Is thickly peopled with the prayers of men.
We have no dream! What then?
Like winged wayfarers the height they scale
By Him that offers them they shall prevail—
The prayers of men.
But where is found a prayer for me;
How should I pray?
My heart is sick and full of strife.
I heard one whisper, with departing breath,
"Suffer us not, for any pains of death,
To fall from Thee."
But, O, the pains of life! the pains of life!
There is no comfort now, and naught to win,
But yet—I will begin.

I.

"Preserve to me my wealth," I do not say,
For that is wasted away;
And much of it was cankered ere it went.
"Preserve to me my health," I cannot say,
For that, upon a day,
Went after other delights to banishment.

II.

What can I pray? "Give me forgetfulness?"
No, I would still possess
Past away smiles, though present fronts be stern.
"Give me again my kindred?" Nay, not so;
Not idle prayers. We know
They that have crossed the river cannot return.

III.

I do not pray, "Comfort me! comfort me!"
For how should comfort be?
O—O that cooing mouth—that little white head!
No; but I pray, "If it be not too late,
Open to me the gate,
That I may find my babe when I am dead.

IV.

"Show me the path. I had forgotten Thee
When I was happy and free,
Walking down here in the gladsome light o' the sun;
But now I come and mourn; O set my feet
In the road to Thy blest seat,
And for the rest, O God, Thy will be done."

Loved too Late.

YEAR after year, with a glad content,
In and out of our home he went—
In and out.
Ever for us the skies were clear:
His heart carried the care and fear,
The care and doubt

Our hands held with a careless hold
All that he won of honor and gold
In toil and pain.
O dear hands that our burdens bore—
Hands that shall toil for us no more,
Never again!

Oh, it was hard to learn our loss,
Bearing daily the heavy cross—
The cross *he* bore:
To say, with an aching heart and head,
"Would to God that the Love now dead
Were here once more!"

For when the Love we held too light
Was gone away from our speech and sight,
No bitter tears,
No passionate words of fond regret,
No yearning grief, could pay the debt
Of thankless years.

Oh, *now* while the sweet Love lingers near,
Grudge not the tender words of cheer.
Leave none unsaid.
For the heart can have no sadder fate
Than some day to awake — too late —
And find Love dead!

Lilac Bushes.

UNDER the lilac bushes,
When the bloom was at its height,
Under the fragrant lilacs,
We stood on a summer's night,
While he told me the old, old story —
Old and yet ever new;
And I listened, because I loved him:
What else could a woman do?

Under the lilac bushes,
Only ourselves alone,
I bent to his lightest whisper,
I thrilled to his lowest tone.
He painted a glowing future,
Beautiful, fond, and true,
And I listened, because I believed him:
What else could a woman do?

Oh, such a glorious summer!
Never its like before;
Never such wealth of gladness
Had flooded a glad heart o'er;

Never such joy in living
Under the heavens blue;
And I loved him, *because* I loved him:
What else could a woman do?

Where is he now? Why ask me?
For I am learning to-day
There are always two sides to a story,
Look at it as we may.
Some one will read the right side;
The wrong has fallen to me,
And my heart has refused to question
Where its false love may be.

Far Out in the West.

I AM poor; I am shabby. There's something about me
That fellows in broadcloth will look on askance;
The maids in their soft flowing flounces will doubt me,
And sneer if I offer my hand in the dance.
But when I am sad, there's a vision that cures me,
And lightens the heart that has sunk in my breast;
In daylight and darkness it ever allures me:
A jolly log-cabin far out in the West—
A shabby log-cabin, a shaky log-cabin,
A jolly log-cabin far out in the West.

Then ho! for the land where the sunset is glowing!
Good-by to the town with its perils and woe!
Where forests are waving and broad rivers flowing
There is room for a fellow whose pockets are low.

It is there in my fancy whatever befalls me,
It shows me the joys that are purest and best.
Ah, sweet is the vision that ever enthralls me:
A jolly log-cabin far out in the West —
A shabby log-cabin, a shaky log-cabin,
A jolly log-cabin far out in the West.

Who cares for the scorn of the city's proud daughters,
Where Fashion and Folly together agree?
There is one who will dwell by Missouri's fair waters,
And wait at the wash-tub for Love and for me.
The sounds that I hear are the voices of childhood,
The crow of old chanticleer doing his best;
The home of my heart is a home in the wildwood,
A jolly log-cabin far out in the West —
A shabby log-cabin, a shaky log-cabin,
A jolly log-cabin far out in the West.

I am poor, but I'm honest. The fetters that bind me
Will fall in the West like dead leaves from the tree;
A prince on the prairie the future shall find me,
As proud as the eagle, as wild and as free.
What words shall I borrow to tell of my rapture?
When eve warns the hunter of home and of rest,
With a gun on my shoulder, a deer as my capture,
I'll ride to the cabin far out in the West —
A shabby log-cabin, a shaky log-cabin,
A jolly log-cabin far out in the West.

Maiden and Weathercock.

MAIDEN.

WEATHERCOCK, on the village spire,
With your golden feathers all on fire,
Tell me what can you see from your perch
Above there, over the tower of the church?

WEATHERCOCK.

I can see the roofs, and the streets below,
And the people moving to and fro
And beyond, without either roof or street,
The great salt sea and the fisherman's fleet.

I can see a ship come sailing in
Beyond the headlands and harbor of Lynn,
And a young man standing on the deck,
With a silken kerchief round his neck.

Now he is pressing it to his lips,
And now he is kissing his finger-tips,
And now he is lifting and waving his hand,
And blowing the kisses toward the land!

MAIDEN.

Ah, that is the ship from over the sea
That is bringing my lover back to me!
Bringing my lover so fond and true,
Who does not change with the wind, like you.

WEATHERCOCK.

If I change with all the winds that blow,
It is only because they made me so;
And people would think it wondrous strange
If I, a weathercock, should not change!

O pretty maiden, so fine and fair,
With your dreamy eyes and your golden hair,
When you and your lover meet to-day,
You will thank me for looking some other way!

The Sea and the Moon.

THE Sea fell in love with the Moon;
The Moon only laughed at the Sea,
And went on, turning midnight to noon,
And silvering hill-top and lea.

"Look down, lovely Moon," said the Sea;
"Behold your own beautiful face;
'Tis so pure and so charming to me
In my heart I have given it place."

She looked, with a flush of disdain;
Her glorious image was there;
And she knew — for a woman is vain —
That the image was spotless and fair.

Away sped the Moon in her splendor;
But oft and again she would turn,
With glance growing more and more tender,
To the Sea, where her image did burn.

There trembled the silvery illusion;
Nay, Moon, do not quiver nor start;
'Tis the tremor of Love's soft confusion,
The throb of the Sea's faithful heart.

And the Moon would remember and ponder
The vision she saw in the wave,
As away round the world she would wander
And she knew that the Sea was her Slave.

And month after month when returning
In her full she would glory again,
Her face in the ocean still burning
Gave the Moon a slight feeling of pain.

Still the Sea followed sorrowing after,
His breast swelling over with love,
His sighs waking only the laughter
Of the Moon sailing queenly above.

Though ages on ages have perished,
Still Love sings the changeless old tune,
And with passion still faithfully cherished,
The Sea follows after the Moon.

Follows after till cruel shores stay him,
Then breaks his great heart with a sigh;
For the Fates ever mock and delay him
Whose aim is unwise and too high.

Indecision.

SO many dreams and fancies creep
Around the vision sweet and rare
In the long vigils that I keep
While framing a fond lover's prayer
To that one maid whose radiant glance
Seems brighter far than all the rest,
The one of whom I say, "Perchance
Her gathered life will make me blest,"
That, after all, I seem to think,
Why should her beauty be mine own?
Beneath my touch the light might shrink
That shines so fair and pure alone.

I've thought for weeks — am thinking yet —
I wonder if yon glittering star
So high in heaven's ether set
Had not much rather gleam afar.
I wonder if the glowing rose
Is happier on a maiden's breast
Than when it in the garden grows
A lovely blossom 'mid the rest.
You say, perhaps, "The wisest way
Is just to give the maid a voice."
If she said "Yes?" Day follows day —
In future years would we rejoice?

Married for Love.

"YES, Jack Brown was a splendid fellow
But married for love, you know;
I remember the girl very well—
Sweet little Kitty Duffau.
Pretty, and loving, and good,
And bright as a fairy elf,
I was very much tempted indeed
To marry Kitty myself.

"But her friends were all of them poor,
And Kitty had not a cent;
And I knew I should never be
With 'love in a cottage' content.
So Jack was the lucky wooer,
Or unlucky—anyway
You can see how shabby his coat,
And his hair is turning grey.

"But I'm told he thinks himself rich
With Kitty and homely joys;
A cot far away out of town,
Full of noisy girls and boys.
Poor Jack! I'm sorry, and all that,
But of course he very well knew
That fellows who marry for love
Must drink of the liquor they brew."

And the handsome Augustus smiled,
His coat was in perfect style,
And women still spoke of his grace,
And gave him their sweetest smile.
But he thought that night of Jack Brown,
And said, "I'm growing old;
I think I must really marry
Some beautiful girl with gold."

Years passed, and the bachelor grew
Tiresome, and stupid, and old;
He had not been able to find
The beautiful girl with gold.
Alone with his fancies he dwelt,
Alone in the crowded town,
Till one day he suddenly met
The friend of his youth, Jack Brown.

"Why, Gus!" "Why, Jack!" What a meeting!
Jack was so happy and gay;
The bachelor sighed for content,
As he followed his friend away
To the cot far out of town,
Set deep in its orchard trees,
Scented with lilies and roses,
Cooled with the ocean breeze.

"Why, Jack, what a beautiful place!
What did it cost?" "Oh, it *grew*.
There were only three rooms at first,
Then soon the three were too few.

So we added a room now and then;
And oft in the evening hours,
Kitty, the children and I
Planted the trees and flowers.

"And they grew as the children grew
(Jack, Harry, and Grace and Belle)."
"And where are the youngsters now?"
"All happy and doing well.
Jack went to Spain for our house,—
His road is level and clear,—
And Harry's a lawyer in town,
Making three thousand a year.

"And Grace and Belle are well married,—
They married for love, as is best;
But often our birdies come back
To visit the dear home nest.
So my sweet wife Kitty and I
From labor and care may cease;
We have enough, and age can bring
Nothing but love and peace."

But over and over again
The bachelor thought that night,
"Home, and wife, and children!
Jack Brown was, after all, right.
Oh! if in the days of my youth
I had honestly loved and wed!
For now when I'm old there's no one cares
Whether I'm living or dead."

The Great Attraction.

OH, charming Kitty, fair art thou,
Fair as a rose in June;
Thy hair like braided sunshine is,
Thy voice a pleasant tune.
But 'tis not for thy Beauty, sweet,
I lay my heart beneath thy feet—
Not for thy Beauty, sweet.

But thou art wise and witty too;
Thy little tongue can say
The shrewdest and the sweetest things
In such a pleasant way.
But 'tis not for thy Wisdom, sweet,
I lay my heart beneath thy feet—
Not for thy Wisdom, sweet.

And thou canst sing and dance and paint,
And chatter French and Greek,
And to the poet, priest and sage,
In his own way canst speak.
But 'tis not for thy Learning, sweet,
I lay my heart beneath thy feet—
Not for thy Learning, sweet.

Thou art so amiable and true,
Thy temper is so mild,
So humble and obedient too,
Love guides thee like a child.

But not for thy good Temper, sweet,
I lay my heart beneath thy feet—
Not for thy Temper, sweet.

Not for thy Beauty or thy Youth,
Not for thy Heart's rich store,
Not for thy sunny Temper's truth,
Thy Wisdom, Wit, or Lore,
I love thee, sweet: such things are trash,
I love thy hundred thousand Cash—
Thy $100,000 Cash!

Sweets of Woman's Life.

A BABY at rest on mother's breast,
Too young to smile or weep,
Conscious of naught but mother's love,—
So sweet is infant's sleep.

A child at play in meadows green,
Plucking the fragrant flowers,
Chasing the bright-winged butterflies,—
So sweet are childhood's hours.

A maiden fair as early dawn,
Radiant with every grace,
Glad'ning the eye that looks on her,—
So sweet is beauty's face.

A softly-blushing, downcast look,
Murmur of startled dove,
Answering another's tender words,—
So sweet is maiden's love.

A white-robed virgin, kneeling low,
Before God's altar bows,
Forever join'd two hearts and hands,—
So sweet are marriage vows.

A youthful mother bending o'er
Her first-born, beauteous boy,
Forever hers till death shall part,—
So sweet a mother's joy.

The matron in life's autumn-time,
With young life clustered o'er,
Her children's children clasp her knees,—
So rich is autumn's store.

The Soul of Love.

THOU think'st perchance I love thee,
O my treasure,
For flowing locks or diadem,
So without measure;

For curving lashes, rosy lips,
Or smile so gay.
Believe not so: for these are things
Which pass away.

Believe not so: that were to doubt
The soul of love;
To think it had no power to live
Such charms above.

Believe not so: that which I love—
Oh, know it, dear!—
With jealous time, nor death itself,
Can disappear.

I love because when on thy face
My fond glance lies,
Thy white soul clearly I behold
In thy dark eyes.

Never Alone.

THE summer sun shone on them. They were two
Whose lives had been combined for many a year.
In youth they paled and blushed as lovers do;
Now no caress brought aught of shame or fear.

"What gem," she asked, "of all our garnered wealth,
Is dearest to you in an hour like this?
What brings you most of soul and spirit health
In the unnumbered treasures of our bliss?"

Softly he bent to kiss the lips that spoke,
"Sweetest of all the joys my life has known
Is that with thee I have had naught to cloak;
Never in any thought have been alone;

"Never in any act. Thy gentle power
Hath bared the very secrets of my breast,
Till leaning on thy heart in every hour,
I have no life but that by thee possessed.

"Tempted and fallen, I have felt thy hand
Raise and sustain me. Sweetheart, love, mine own,
This is the dearest joy our lives command,
To know and feel we cannot be alone."

The King of Denmark's Ride.

WORD was brought to the Danish king
(Hurry!)
That the love of his heart lay suffering,
And pined for the comfort his voice would bring;
(O, ride as though you were flying!)
Better he loves each golden curl
On the brow of that Scandinavian girl
Than his rich crown jewels of ruby and pearl:
And his rose of the isles is dying!

Thirty nobles saddled with speed;
(Hurry!)
Each one mounting a gallant steed
Which he kept for battle and days of need;
(O, ride as though you were flying!)
Spurs were struck in the foaming flank;
Worn-out chargers staggered and sank;
Bridles were slackened, and girths were burst;
But ride as they would, the king rode first,
For his rose of the isles lay dying!

His nobles are beaten, one by one;
(Hurry!)
They have fainted, and faltered, and homeward gone;
His little fair page now follows alone,
For strength and for courage trying!

The king looked back at that faithful child;
Wan was the face that answering smiled;
They passed the drawbridge with clattering din,
Then he dropped; and only the king rode in
Where his rose of the isles lay dying!

The king blew a blast on his bugle horn;
(Silence!)
No answer came; but faint and forlorn
An echo returned on the cold gray morn,
Like the breath of a spirit sighing.
The castle portal stood grimly wide;
None welcomed the king from that weary ride;
For dead, in the light of the dawning day,
The pale sweet form of the welcomer lay,
Who had yearned for his voice while dying!

The panting steed, with a drooping crest,
Stood weary.
The king returned from her chamber of rest,
The thick sobs choking in his breast;
And, that dumb companion eyeing,
The tears gushed forth, which he strove to check;
He bowed his head on his charger's neck:
"O steed, that every nerve didst strain,
Dear steed, our ride hath been in vain
To the halls where my love lay dying!"

Lady Clare.

IT was the time when lilies blow,
And clouds are highest up in air,
Lord Ronald brought a lily-white doe
To give his cousin, Lady Clare.

I trow they did not part in scorn;
Lovers long betrothed were they;
They two will wed the morrow morn;
God's blessing on the day!

"He does not love me for my birth,
Nor for my lands so broad and fair;
He loves me for my own true worth,
And that is well," said Lady Clare.

In there came old Alice the nurse,
Said, "Who was this that went from thee?"
"It was my cousin," said Lady Clare;
To-morrow he weds with me."

"Oh, God be thanked!" said Alice the nurse,
"That all comes round so just and fair:
Lord Ronald is heir of all your lands,
And you are not the Lady Clare."

"Are ye out of your mind, my nurse, my nurse?"
Said Lady Clare, "that ye speak so wild?"
"As God's above," said Alice the nurse,
"I speak the truth; you are my child.

"The old Earl's daughter died at my breast;
I speak the truth, as I live by bread!
I buried her like my own sweet child,
And put my child in her stead."

"Falsely, falsely have ye done,
Oh, mother," she said, "if this be true,
To keep the best man under the sun
So many years from his due."

"Nay now, my child," said Alice the nurse,
"But keep the secret for your life,
And all you have will be Lord Ronald's,
When you are man and wife."

"If I'm a beggar born," she said,
"I will speak out, for I dare not lie.
Pull off, pull off the brooch of gold,
And fling the diamond necklace by."

"Nay now, my child," said Alice the nurse,
"But keep the secret all ye can."
She said, "Not so; but I will know
If there be any faith in man."

"Nay now, what faith?" said Alice the nurse;
"The man will cleave unto his right."
"And he shall have it," the lady replied,
"Tho' I should die to-night."

"Yet give one kiss to your mother dear!
Alas, my child! I sinned for thee."
"Oh mother, mother, mother," she said,
"So strange it seems to me.

"Yet here's a kiss for my mother dear,
My mother dear, if this be so;
And lay your hand upon my head,
And bless me, mother, ere I go."

She clad herself in a russet gown,
She was no longer Lady Clare;
She went by dale, and she went by down,
With a single rose in her hair.

The lily-white doe Lord Ronald had bought
Leapt up from where she lay,
Dropt her head in the maiden's hand,
And followed her all the way.

Down stept Lord Ronald from his tower:
"O Lady Clare, you shame your worth!
Why come you drest like a village maid,
That are the flower of the earth?"

"If I come drest like a village maid,
I am but as my fortunes are;
I am a beggar born," she said,
"And not the Lady Clare."

"Play me no tricks," said Lord Ronald,
"For I am yours in word and in deed;
Play me no tricks," said Lord Ronald,
"Your riddle is hard to read."

Oh, and proudly stood she up!
Her heart within her did not fail;
She looked into Lord Ronald's eyes,
And told him all her nurse's tale.

He laughed a laugh of merry scorn;
He turned, and kissed her where she stood.
"If you are not the heiress born,
And I," said he, "the next in blood.

"If you are not the heiress born,
And I," said he, "the lawful heir,
We two will wed to-morrow morn,
And you shall still be Lady Clare."

A Blue Stocking.

SOME years ago I madly loved
A maiden scientific,
Whose knowledge about everything
Was perfectly terrific!

She writes to-day for magazines
Essays, and verse, and stories;
And in all kinds of abstruse themes
She positively glories!

Her mind of long-forgotten lore
Is an unique condenser;
She knows by heart John Stuart Mill,
And likewise Herbert Spencer!

Before her comprehensive brain
All difficulties vanish;
She's mastered Hebrew, Chinese, Greek,
And French of course — and Spanish.

In Latin she composes hymns,
And five-act plays in German;
While she in Zend or Portuguese
Could surely write a sermon!

But when I spoke of love to her,
In accents chaste, poetic,
She'd chat for hours to prove that love
Was hate turned sympathetic!

And show by legends, myths or dates,
And curious Hindoo omens,
That such unintellectual trash
Was unknown to the Romans!

I thought the only way to please
Her most æsthetic optic
Was quietly to go to work
And master ancient Coptic!

And this I did, and further wrote
A mammoth life of Moses;
Also three volumes in blank verse
About metempsychosis!

It took me many years, and when
I went into her dwelling
I found—she'd run off with a man
Who made mistakes in spelling!

Good Night.

OH, sweet my love, the hour is late;
The moon goes down in silver state,
As here alone I watch and wait.
Though far from thee, my lips repeat,
In whispers low, Good night, my sweet.

The house is still, but o'er the gloom
Of starlit gardens, faint with bloom,
I lean out from my darkened room,
And only hear the roaming breeze
Move softly in the lilac trees.

Somewhere beneath these gracious skies
My bonny love a-dreaming lies,
With slumber brooding in her eyes.
Go seek her, happy wind so free,
And kiss her folded hands for me.

Across this dome of silent air,
On tides of floating ether bear,
To where she sleeps, my whispered prayer;
The day has brought the night forlorn,—
God keep thee, little love, till dawn.

While life is dear, and love is best,
And young moons drop adown the west,
My lone heart, turning to its rest,
Beneath the stars shall whisper clear,
Good night, my sweet, though none may hear.

Margaret.

"The youngest daughter of Maximilian II entered a convent while young, and remained fifty-seven years, when she died."—*History.*

PRINCESS of a haughty line,
Why this strange caprice of thine,
Margaret?
Fairer than queens are wont to be,
Young, and panting to be free—
These forget?

Happy, in thy lofty pride,
To be wooed and won a bride
By one heart;
Hopeless, from thy noble birth,
E'er to wed for honest worth—
Then depart.

Closing light from cloister doors—
Off'ring prayer from stony floors—
Counting beads;
Shedding tears, through years of pain,
Doing penance, praise to gain
For good deeds.

Paler than the palest nun,
Colder than the dead become,
Thou wilt grow;

Toiling at the broider frame,
Lisping oft the holy name,
In thy woe.

Dreaming of the courtly glare
Of some knight with golden hair,
Thou hast known;
Waking in a wretched room,
Full of sad hearts and of gloom,
To bemoan.

Pictures rare, of what thou'st seen,
Painting, all the hours between
Holy prayer;
Painting banks with crystal streams,
Chamois leaps, and rainbow gleams,
Through the air.

Tracing on the canvas ground,
Till thy very soul is bound
In a spell;
Seeking something pure and high—
Pining to be loved or die,
Each as well.

Princess of a haughty line,
We have wept this fate of thine,
Margaret;
Mourned the darkness of an age
Leading minds from God's true page,
Desolate.

On the Doorstep.

THE conference-meeting through at last,
We boys around the vestry waited
To see the girls come tripping past,
Like snowbirds willing to be mated.

Not braver he that leaps the wall
By level musket-flashes litten,
Than I, who stepped before them all,
Who longed to see me get the mitten.

But no; she blushed and took my arm!
We let the old folks have the highway,
And started toward the Maple Farm
Along a kind of lover's by-way.

I can't remember what we said,
'Twas nothing worth a song or story;
Yet that rude path by which we sped
Seemed all transformed and in a glory.

The snow was crisp beneath our feet,
The moon was full, the fields were gleaming;
By hood and tippet sheltered sweet,
Her face with youth and health was beaming.

The little hand outside her muff,—
O sculptor, if you could but mold it!—
So lightly touched my jacket-cuff,
To keep it warm I had to hold it.

To have her with me there alone,—
'Twas love and fear and triumph blended.
At last we reached the foot-worn stone
Where that delicious journey ended.

The old folks, too, were almost home;
Her dimpled hand the latches fingered,
We heard the voices nearer come,
Yet on the doorstep still we lingered.

She shook her ringlets from her hood,
And with a "Thank you, Ned," dissembled,
But yet I knew she understood
With what a daring wish I trembled.

A cloud passed kindly overhead,
The moon was slyly peeping through it,
Yet hid its face, as if it said,
"Come, now or never! do it! *do it!*"

My lips till then had only known
The kiss of mother and of sister,
But, somehow, full upon her own
Sweet, rosy, darling mouth,—I kissed her!

Perhaps 'twas boyish love, yet still,
O listless woman, weary lover!
To feel once more that fresh, wild thrill
I'd give—but who can live youth over?

Blue-Beard.

HE is not dead, for I am he!
Nay, little one, you need not start;
That awful closet is my heart.
I pray you not to turn the key.

You hold the matter in suspense,
You hesitate, ah! all is lost;
The key is turned, the threshold crossed,
Now you must take the consequence.

Seven dead loves you bring to view—
No wonder that you stood aghast;
You should not dive into the past
If you would trust that men are true.

Seven dead loves! a heavy load.
You see the first, a little girl
With violet eyes and teeth of pearl;
That was a school-boy episode.

When college days gave life a glow,
And tender hearts wrought rapid slaughter,
I courted the professor's daughter;
That's she — the second in the row.

I scarcely know how it occurred;
I spent vacation with a friend,
And ere three weeks were at an end
I loved his sister — she's the third.

A grim old lawyer taught me Kent;
I made his mansion my abode,
And spoke some words not in the "Code,"—
His youngest girl knew what they meant.

When fashion's flame was all alive,
Where pleasure flung her golden haze
Athwart the pathway of the days,
I met and worshiped number five.

But yonder, where the maple-tree
Casts shadows on the old stone wall,
And slumberous peace broods over all,
A village maid enraptured me.

You see one other figure stand,
Her memory will forever last;
I hold her sacred since she passed
The portals of the silent land.

So Blue-Beard lives, and I am he:
But come, Fatima, close the door,
You cannot love me any more;
The blood of knowledge stains the key.

Before the Wedding.

MILK-WHITE and honey-sweet its flowers
The locust tree is shedding;
Oh, if this weather would but stay,
I could not ask a lovelier day
To-morrow for my wedding!
Yes, 'tis in truth my bridal path
The wind with flowers is strewing.
The thing a woman says she won't
She's always sure of doing;
And from a child I have declared
I'd choose a maid to tarry,
And single-handed fight my way
Before I'd ever marry
(Tho' he, by all his deeds and words,
Were worth and wisdom proving)
A Methodist itinerant,
And keep forever moving,
Moving, moving, moving,—
Just two years in a place,—
Stopping here and off again,
With scarce a breathing-space.

But when camp-meeting came around,
A year ago this summer,
The Sudbury people had a tent,
And I, with Sister Hartley, went,

And first heard Brother Plummer.
"A young man looking for a wife,"
Was someone's sly reminder;
"And he may look for all of me,"
I said, "and never find her."

But when I came to hear him preach,
He told the gospel story
So thrillingly, through all the grove
Went up one shout of "Glory!"
Rough men were bowed, hard sinners wept,
I owned his power to hold me—
His glowing fervor, like a spell,
Against my will controlled me.
For "who is he?" I said, my own
Admiring thoughts reproving;
A Methodist itinerant,
Who keeps forever moving,
Moving, moving, moving,—
Just two years in a place,—
"That's too hard a way," thought I,
"To run the Christian race!"

I said the preacher pleased me not,
I did not wish to meet him;
And, when we met, I tried to see
How boldly formal I could be
And courteously treat him;
But when a woman tries to hate,
Be sure it's love's beginning;

The more I frowned the more I felt
That he my heart was winning.
Dull (may the Lord forgive!) I found
The class unless he led it,
And sweeter seemed the blessed word
Of Scripture if he read it;
And, from the closing love-feast, when,
As we walked home together,
He led me down a quiet path,
And calmly asked me whether
"My future should be one with his?"—
And I must take or lose him,
I felt my hold on earthly joy
Was lost should I refuse him.
"But if I love there's but one way,"
I said, "my love of proving;
And I am willing, for your sake,
To keep forever moving,
Moving, moving, moving,—
Just two years in a place,—
Happy wheresoe'er I go
If I but see your face!"

So now my bridal blossoms fall,
These locust-flowers sweet-scented!
My future pathway is the one
I've always thought that I would shun,
Yet I am well contented!
We choose not for ourselves; we go
The way the conference sends us;

But, rough or smooth, we know thro' all
A Father's care attends us.
His perfect strength our weakness shields
His patient love broods o'er us,—
What matters it what changes fill
The years that lie before us?
We only pray we may be kept
From faithless servants proving,
And onward as our footsteps press,
May they be heavenward moving!

The Little Kings and Queens.

MONARCHS whose kingdom no man bounds,
No leagues uphold, no conquest spreads,
Whose thrones are any mossy mounds,
Whose crowns are curls on sunny heads!

The only sovereigns on the earth
Whose sway is certain to endure;
No line of kings or kingliest birth
Is of its reigning half so sure.

No fortress built in all the land
So strong they cannot storm it free;
No palace made too rich, too grand,
For them to roam triumphantly.

No tyrant so hard-hearted known
Can their diplomacy resist;

They can usurp his very throne;
He abdicates when he is kissed.

No hovel in the world so small,
So meanly built, so squalid, bare,
They will not go within its wall,
And set their reign of splendor there.

No beggar too forlorn and poor
To give them all they need to thrive;
They frolic in his yard and door,
The happiest kings and queens alive.

Oh, blessed little kings and queens,
The only sovereigns in the earth!
Their sovereignty nor rests nor leans
On pomp of riches or of birth.

Nor ends when cruel death lays low
In dust each little curly head;
All other sovereigns crownless go,
And are forgotten, when they're dead.

But these hold changeless empire past,
Triumphant past, all earthly scenes;
We worship, truest to the last,
The buried "little kings and queens."

The Sick Child.

DEAR little eyes, with their fringed lids
Lifted so heavily, piteously,
Would I could see in their depths once more
The flash and sparkle of childhood's glee!

Dear little lips, that have known no guile,
Innocent, beautiful, fever red,
Would ye were ringing again with mirth,
As in the days that so soon have fled!

Dear little gentle and pensive face,
Wasted, and sunken, and shadowed now,
The high brow white with an unknown light,
Would thou wert rosy with health's warm glow!

Dear little patient and suffering child,
Pleading for pity with dying eyes!
O! it is cruel and hard to stand
Powerless to aid while a loved one dies.

Art thou departing, my precious dove?
Dearest and tenderest lamb of the fold;
Thoughtful and wise as a woman now,
Beautiful darling, but five years old.

Father in heaven, thy will is mine,
With thee my darling were safe and blest;
But, O! that thy wisdom and love could see
That now to restore her to life were best!

We Two.

WE own no houses, no lots, no lands,
No dainty viands for us are spread,
By sweat of our brows and toil of our hands,
We earn the pittance that buys our bread.
And yet we live in a grander state—
Sunbeam and I—than the millionaires
Who dine off silver and golden plate,
With liveried lackeys behind their chairs.

We have no riches in houses or stocks,
No bank-books show our balance to draw,
Yet we carry a safe-key that unlocks
More treasure than Crœsus ever saw.
We wear no velvet nor satin fine,
We dress in a very homely way;
But ah! what luminous lusters shine
About Sunbeam's gowns and my hood en-gray!

When we walk together—we do not ride,
We are far too poor—it is very rare
We are bowed unto from the other side
Of the street—but for this we do not care;
We are not lonely, we pass along,
Sunbeam and I, and *you* cannot see,
We can, what tall and beautiful throngs
Of angels we have for company.

No harp, no dulcimer, no guitar,
Breaks into music at Sunbeam's touch,
But do not think that our evenings are
Without their music; there is none such
In the concert halls, where the palpitent air
In musical billows floats and swims;
Our lives are as psalms, and our foreheads wear
A calm, like the *peal* of beautiful hymns.

When cloudy weather obscures our skies,
And some days darken with drops of rain,
We have but to look in each other's eyes,
And all is balmy and bright again.
Ah, ours is the alchemy that transmutes
The drugs to elixir—the dross to gold;
And so we live on Hesperian fruits,
Sunbeam and I, and never grow old.

Never grow old, but we live in peace,
And love our fellows and envy none,
And our hearts are glad at the large increase
Of plentiful virtues under the sun.
And the days pass on with their thoughtful tread,
And the shadows lengthen toward the west;
But the wane of our young years brings no dread
To break the harvest of quiet rest.

Sunbeam's hair will be streaked with gray,
And Time will furrow my darling's brow,
But never can Time's hand steal away
The tender halo that clasps it now.

So we dwell in wonderful opulence,
With nothing to hurt us or upbraid;
And my life trembles with reverence,
And Sunbeam's spirit is not afraid.

The Children's Hour.

BETWEEN the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the children's hour.

I hear in the chamber above me,
The patter of little feet;
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamp-light,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper and then a silence;
Yet I know by their merry eyes,
They are plotting and planning together
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
A sudden raid from the hall,
By three doors left unguarded
They entered my castle wall.

They climbed up into my turret,
O'er the arms and back of my chair;
If I try to escape they surround me;
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old moustache as I am
Is not a match for you all?

I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down into the dungeon,
In the round tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you forever,
Yes, forever and a day
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin
And moulder in dust away.

Children Going Home.

THEY are going — only going —
Jesus called them long ago;
All the Winter-time they're passing
Softly as the fallen snow.
When the violets in the Spring-time
Catch the azure of the sky,
They are carried out to slumber
Sweetly where the violets lie.

They are going — only going —
When the Summer earth is dressed,
In their cold hands holding roses
Folded to each silent breast;
When the Autumn hangs red banners
Out above the harvest sheaves,
They are going — ever going —
Thick and fast like falling leaves.

All along the mighty ages,
All adown the solemn time,
They have taken up their homeward
March to that serener clime,
Where the watching, waiting angels
Lead them from the shadow dim
To the brightness of His presence
Who has called them unto Him.

They are going — only going —
Out of pain and into bliss,
Out of sad and sinful weakness
Into perfect holiness.
Snowy brows — no care shall shade them;
Bright eyes — tears shall never dim;
Rosy lips — no time shall shade them,
Jesus called them unto him.

Little hearts forever stainless,
Little hands as pure as they,
Little feet by angels guided
Never a forbidden way.
They are going — ever going —
Leaving many a lonely spot;
But 'tis Jesus who has called them,
Suffer and forbid them not.

Afterglow.

GRANDMOTHER paces with stately tread
Forward and back through the quaint old room,
Out of the firelight, dancing and red,
Into the gathering dusk and gloom;
Forward and back, in her silken dress
With its fallen ruffles of frost-like lace:
A look of the deepest tenderness
In the faded lines of her fine old face.

Warm on her breast in his red night-gown
Like a scarlet lily the baby lies,
While softly the tired lids droop down
Over the little sleepy eyes.
Grandmother sings to him sweet and low,
And memories come with the cradle-song
Of the days when she sang it long ago,
When her life was young and her heart was strong.

Grandmother's children have left her now;
The large old house is a shadowed place;
But shining out in the sunset glow
Of her life, like a star, comes the baby's face.
He lies where of old his father lay;
Softly she sings him the same sweet strain;
Till the years intervening are swept away,
And the joy of life's morning is hers again.

Grandmother's gray head is bending low
Over the dear little downy one;
The steps of her pathway are few to go;
The baby's journey is just begun.
Yet the rosy dawn of his childish love
Brightens the evening that else were dim;
And in after years from her home above,
The light of her blessing will rest on him.

Children in the Household.

OLD age is a garden of faded flowers,
Ruined bowers,
Peopled by cares and failing powers;

Where Pain with his crutch and lonely Grief
Grope with brief,
Slow steps over ruined stalk and leaf.

But the love of children is like some rare
Heavenly air,
That makes long Indian summer there;

A youth in age, when the skies yet glow,
Soft winds blow,
And hearts keep glad under locks of snow.

In the best-wrought life there is still a reft,
Something left
Forever unfinished, a broken weft.

But merciful Nature makes amends,
When she sends
Youth, that takes up our raveled ends,

Our hopes, our loves, that they be not quite
Lost to sight;
But leave behind us a fringe of light.

Blessed be children! Year by year
They appear,
Filling the humblest home with cheer.

Now a daughter and now a son,
One by one
They are cradled, they creep, they walk, they run.

Sons and daughters, until, behold!
Young and old,
A Jacob's-ladder with steps of gold!

A ladder of little heads! each fair
Head a stair
For the angels that visit the parent pair!

Blessed be childhood! even its chains
Are our gains!
Welcome and blessed with all the pains,

Losses, and upward vanishings
Of light wings,—
With all the sorrow and toil it brings,

All burdens that ever those small feet bore
To our door,—
Blessed and welcome forevermore!

How Soon We Lose Them.

HOLD diligent converse with thy children! have them
Morning and evening round thee, love thou them,
And win their love in these rare, beauteous years;
For only while the short-lived dream of childhood
Lasts are they thine, — no longer! When youth comes
Much passes through their thoughts, — which is not thou,
And much allures their hearts, — which thou hast not.
They gain a knowledge of an older world
Which fills their souls; and floats before them now
The Future. And the Present thus is lost.
Then, with his little traveling-pocket full
Of indispensables, the boy goes forth.
Weeping, thou watchest till he disappears,
And never after is he thine again!
He comes back home, — he loves, — he wins a maid, —
He lives! They live, and others spring to life
From him, — and now thou hast in him, —
A human being, — but no more a child!
Thy daughter, wedded, takes a frequent joy
In bringing thee her children to thy house!
Thou hast the mother, but the child no more!
Hold diligent converse with thy children! Have them
Morning and evening round thee, love thou them,
And win their love in the rare, beauteous years.

The Mother's Day-Dream.

A MOTHER sat at her sewing,
But her brow was full of thought,
The little one playing beside her
Her own sweet mischief wrought.
A book on a chair lay near her;
'Twas open, I strove to see,
At the old Greek artist's story—
I paint for eternity."

So I fancied all her dreaming;
I watched her serious eye
As the 'broidery dropped from her fingers,
And she heaved a heartfelt sigh.
She drew the little one nearer
And looked on the sunny face,
Swept the bright curls from the open brow,
And kissed it with loving grace.

And she thought, "I, too, am an artist,
My life-work here I see;
This sweet, dear face my hand must trace,
I must paint for eternity.
Hence each dark passion shadow!
Pain's deeply graven lines!
Here must be the reflected beauty
That from the pure heart shines.

"But how shall I blend the colors?
How mingle the light and shade
Or arrange the weird surroundings
The future has arrayed?
O life, thou hast weary nightfalls,
And days all drear that be,
But from thy darkness marvelous grace
Wilt thou evoke for me?

"Alas, that I am but a learner!
So where shall I make me wise,
Or obtain the rare old colors—
The Master's precious dyes?
I must haste to the fount of beauty,
Must pleadingly kneel at His feet,
And crave, 'mid his wiser scholars,
The humblest pupil's seat.

"Then, hand and heart together,
Some grace shall add each day;
Thus, thus, shall her face grow lustrous
With beauty that cannot decay.
My darling! God guide my pencil
And grant me the vision to see
In the light of His love, without blemish or stain,
In the coming eternity!"

Then the mother awoke from her day-dream,
Her face grew bright again,
And I knew her faith was strengthened
By more than angel's ken;

Her fingers flew the faster
As she sang a soft, low song;
It seemed like a prayer for the child so fair
As it thrilled the air along.

Happy Women.

IMPATIENT women, as you wait,
In cheerful homes to-night, to hear
The sound of steps that, soon or late,
Shall come as music to your ear.

Forget yourselves a little while,
And think in pity of the pain
Of women who will never smile
To hear a coming step again.

With babes that in their cradles sleep,
Or cling to you in perfect trust,
Think of the mothers left to weep
Their infants lying in the dust.

And when the step you wait for comes,
And all your world is full of light,
O women safe in happy homes,
Pray for all lonesome souls to-night!

Young America.

"COME hither, you madcap darling!"
I said to my four-year-old.
"Pray what shall be done to the bad, bad girl
Who will not do as she's told?
Too well you love your own wee way,
While little you love to mind;
But mamma knows what is best for you,
And isn't she always kind?"

So I told her of "Casabianca,"
And the fearful burning ship.
"Do you think," said I, "such a child as that
His mother would have to whip?"
And my heart went out with the story sad
Of this boy so nobly brave,
Who would not *dare* to disobey,
Even his life to save.

Then her eyes grew bright as the morning,
And they seemed to look me through.
Ah—ah, thought I, you understand
The lesson I have in view.
"Now what do you think of this lad, my love?
Tell all that is in your heart."
"I fink," she said, "he was dreffful good,
But he wasn't the least bit smart.

Never Grow Old.

THOU wilt never grow old,
Nor weary, nor sad, in the home of thy birth;
My beautiful lily, thy leaves will unfold
In a clime that is purer and brighter than earth.
O holy and fair, I rejoice thou art there,
In that kingdom of light, with its cities of gold;
Where the air thrills with angel hosannas, and where
Thou wilt never grow old, sweet,
Never grow old!

I am a pilgrim, with sorrow and sin
Haunting my footsteps wherever I go;
Life is a warfare my title to win —
Well will it be if it end not in woe.
Pray for me, sweet, I am laden with care,
Dark are my garments with mildew and mold;
Thou, my bright angel, art sinless and fair,
And wilt never grow old, sweet,
Never grow old!

Now, canst thou hear from thy home in the skies,
All the fond words I am whispering to thee?
Dost thou look down on me with the soft eyes,
Greeting me oft ere thy spirit was free?
So I believe, though the shadows of time
Hide the bright spirit I yet shall behold;
Thou wilt still love me, and — pleasure sublime —
Thou wilt never grow old, sweet,
Never grow old!

Thus wilt thou be when the pilgrim, grown gray,
Weeps when the vines from the hearthstone are riven;
Faith shall behold thee as pure as the day
Thou wert torn from the earth and transplanted to heaven.
O holy and fair, I rejoice thou art there,
In that kingdom of light, with its cities of gold,
Where the air thrills with angel hosannas, and where
Thou wilt never grow old, sweet,
Never grow old!

Two Pictures.

AN old farmhouse, with meadows wide
And sweet with clover on each side;
A bright-eyed boy, who looks from out
The door the woodbine wreathed about,
And wishes this one thought all day:
"Oh, if I could but fly away
From this dull spot, the world to see,
How happy, happy, happy,
How happy I would be!"

Amid the city's constant din,
A man who round the world has been,
Is thinking, thinking, all day long:
"Oh, if I could only trace once more
The field-path to the farmhouse door,
The old green meadows could I see,
How happy, happy, happy,
How happy I would be!"

The Boys.

[Delivered by Holmes on the meeting of his class thirty years after graduation.]

HAS there any old fellow got mixed with the boys?
If there has, take him out, without making a noise.
Hang the almanac's cheat and the catalogue's spite!
Old Time is a liar! we're twenty to-night?

We're twenty! We're twenty! Who says we are more?
He's tipsy,—young jackanapes! Show him the door!
"Gray temples at twenty?" Yes! *white* if we please;
Where the snow-flakes fall thickest there's nothing can freeze!

Was it snowing I spoke of? Excuse the mistake!
Look close,—you will see not a sign of a flake!
We want some new garlands for those we have shed,
And these are white roses in place of the red.

We've a trick, we young fellows, you may have been told,
Of talking — in public — as if we were old;
That boy, we call "Doctor," and this, we call "Judge;"
It's a neat little fiction,— of course it's all fudge.

That fellow's the "Speaker," the one on the right;
"Mr. Mayor," my young one, how are you to-night?
That's our "Member of Congress," we say, when we chaff;
There's the "Reverend"—what's his name?—don't make me laugh.

That boy with the grave, mathematical look
Made believe he had written a wonderful book,

And the Royal Society thought it was *true!*
So they chose him right in,—a good joke it was, too!

There's a boy, we pretend, with a three-decker brain,
That could harness a team with a logical chain.
When he spoke for our manhood in syllabled fire,
We called him the "Justice," but now he's the "Squire."

And there's a nice youngster of excellent pith;
Fate tried to conceal him by naming him Smith;
But he shouted a song for the brave and the free,—
Just read on his medal, "My country, ... of thee"!

You hear that boy laughing? You think he's all fun;
But the angels laugh, too, at the good he has done;
The children laugh loud, as they troop to his call,
And the poor man that knows him laughs loudest of all!

Yes! we're boys,—always playing with tongue or with pen;
And I sometimes have asked, "Shall we ever be men?"
Shall we always be youthful, and laughing, and gay,
Till the last dear companion drops, smiling, away?

Then here's to our boyhood, its gold and its gray!
The stars of its winter, the dews of its May!
And when we have done with our life-lasting toys!
Dear Father, take care of thy children, The Boys!

The High Tide.

"MOTHER, dear, what is the water saying?
Mother, dear, why does the wild sea roar?"
Cry the children on the white sand playing,—
On the white sand, half a mile from shore.
"Little ones, I fear a storm is growing.
Come away! Oh, let us hasten home!"
Calls the mother; and the wind is blowing,
Flashing up a million eyes of foam.

"Mother, see our footprints as we follow!
Mother, dear, what crawls along before?"
Creeping round and round, through creek and hollow,
Runs the tide between them and the shore.
"Hasten!" cries the mother, forward flying,
"Hasten or we perish; 'tis the tide!"
Led by her, affrighted now and crying,
Fly the children, barefoot, at her side.

"Mother, dear, the sea is coming after!
Mother, 'tis between us and the land,"
Looking back, they see the waves, with laughter,
Wash their little shoes from off the sand.
"Quicker!" screams the mother, "quicker, quicker!"
Fast they fly before the sullen sound.
Step by step, the mother's heart grows sicker,
Inch by inch, the sea creeps round and round.

"Mother, in the water we are wading;
Mother, it grows deeper as we go!"
"Hasten, children, hasten — day is fading —
Higher creeps the tide, so black and slow."
Nay, but at each step the waves grow deeper;
"Turn this way!" but there 'tis deeper still —
Still the sea breathes like a drunken sleeper —
Still the foam crawls, and the wind blows shrill.

"Mother, there is land, all green and dry land,
Grass upon it growing, and a tree!"
A promontory turned into an island,
Upsprings there in the ever-rising sea.
"Mother, 'tis so deep, and we are dripping!
Mother, we are sinking! Haste, oh, haste!"
In her arms uplifting them and gripping,
On she plunges, wading to the waist.

"Mother, set us down among the grasses!
Mother, we are hungry!" they now cry;
Watching the bright water as it passes,
There they sit, between the sea and sky.
Higher crawls the sea, with deep intoning,
Passing every flood-mark, far or near—
"'Tis the high tide!" cries the mother, moaning,
"Coming only once in many a year!"

Higher! higher! lapping round the island,
Flows the water with a sound forlorn.
Those are flowers 'tis snatching from the dry land,—
Pale primroses, sweet and newly born.

Smaller grows the isle where they sit sobbing,
Darker grows the day on every side —
Whiter grows the mother, with heart throbbing
Madly, as she marks the fatal tide.

"Children, cling around me! hold me faster?
Kiss me! God is going to take all three!
Say the prayer I taught you — He is Master!
He is Lord, and in His hands lie we!"
Flowers the tide is snatching while it calls so,
Flowers its lean hands never snatched before;
Will it snatch these human flowers, also,
Where they cling, sad creatures of the shore?

Nay, for o'er the tide a boat is stealing —
On their names a man's strong voice doth cry.
"God be praised!" the mother crieth, kneeling,
"He hath heard our prayer, and help is nigh."
"Father!" cry the children, "this way, father?"
"Here we are!" aloud cry girl and boy,—
Comes the boat,—the children round it gather,
But the mother smiles, and faints for joy.

In his strong arm his pale spouse uplifting,
By her side he sets the children two,—
Through the twilight, shoreward they are drifting,
While the pale stars glimmer in the blue.
Round them, in the tranquil evening weather,
All the scene seems strange as strange can be:—
Waves that wash green fields and knolls of heather,
Lonely trees up-peeping from the sea.

In The Barn.

THE SWALLOWS.

A GREAT dim barn with the fragrant bay
Up to the beam with the winter's hay,
And its shrunken siding wasp-nest gray,

Where the cracks between run up and down,
Like the narrow lines in a striped gown,
And let in light of a golden brown.

They are bars of bronze, they are silver snow,
As the sunshine falls, or sifting slow
The white flakes drift on the wealth below

Of the clover blossoms, faint with June,
That had heard all day his small bassoon
As the ground-bee played his hum-drum tune.

Ah, what would you give to have again
Your pulse keep time with the dancing rain,
When, flashing through at the diamond pane,

You saw the swallows' rapier wings,
As they cut the air in ripples and rings,
And laughed and talked like human things?

When they drank each other's health, you thought,—
For the creak of the corks you surely caught,—
And all day long at their cabins wrought,

Till the mud-walled homes with a foreign look,—
A pictured street in an Aztec book,—
Began to show in each raftered nook?

Never again! Alack and alas!
Like a breath of life on the looking-glass,
Like a censer smoke, the pictures pass.

THE FLAILS.

"Well, Jack and Jim," said the farmer gray,
"The flour is out and we'll thrash to-day!"—
A hand is on the granary door,
And a step is on the threshing-floor,
It is not his, and it is not theirs,—
He went above by the Golden Stairs;
The boys are men and the nicknames grown,—
'Tis James, Esquire, and Reverend John.

How they waltzed the portly sheaves about
As they loosed their belts, and shook them out
In double rows on the threshing-floor,
Clean as the deck of a Seventy-four!
When down the midst in a tawny braid
The sculptured heads of the straw were laid.
It looked a poor man's family bed!
Ah, more than that, 'twas a carpet fair
Whereon the flails with their measured tread
Should time the step of the answered prayer,
"Give us this day our daily bread!"

Then the light half-whirl and the hickory clash,
With the full, free swing of a buckskin lash,

And the trump — tramp — trump, when the bed is new,
In regular, dull, monotonous stroke,
And the click — clack — click, on the floor of oak,
When straw grows thin and the blows strike through;
And the French-clock tick to the dancing feet,
With the small tattoo of the driven sleet,
When the bouncing kernels, bright and brown,
Leap lightly up as the flails come down.

THE FANNING-MILL.

Hang up the flails by the big barn door!
Bring out the mill of the one-boy power!
Nothing at all but a breeze in a box,
Clumsy and red, it rattles and rocks,
Sieves to be shaken and hopper to feed,
A Chinaman's hat turned upside down,
The grain slips through at a hole in the crown —
Out with the chaff and in with the speed!

The crank clanks round with a boy's quick will,
The fan flies fast, till it fills the mill
With its breezy vanes, as the whirled leaves fly
In an open book when the gust goes by;
And the jerky jar and the zigzag jolt
Of the shaken sieves, and the jingling bolt,
And the grate of cogs and the axle's clank
And the rowlock jog of the crazy crank,
And the dusty rush of the gusty chaff,
The worthless wreck of the harvest's raff,
And never a lull, the brisk breeze blows
From the troubled grain its tattered clothes,

Till tumbled and tossed it downward goes
The rickety route by the rackety stair,
Clean as the sand that the simoon snows,
And drifts, at last, in a bank so fair,
You *know* you have found the Answered Prayer.

My Heid is like to Rend, Willie.

MY heid is like to rend, Willie,
My heart is like to break;
I'm wearin' aff my feet, Willie,
I'm dyin' for your sake.
Oh, lay your cheek to mine, Willie,
Your hand on my briest-bane,—
And say that you will think ane me
When I am dead and gane.

It's vain to comfort me, Willie,
Sair grief maun ha'e its will;
But let me rest upon your briest
To sab and greet my fill.
Let me sit on your knee, Willie,
Let me shed by your hair,
And look into the face, Willie,
I never sall see mair!

I'm sittin' on your knee, Willie,
For the last time in my life,—
A puir, heart-broken thing, Willie,
A mither, yet nae wife.

Ay, press your hand upon my heart,
And press it mair and mair,
Or it will burst the silken twine,
Sae strang is its despair.

Oh, wae's me for the hour, Willie,
When we thegither met,—
Oh, wae's me for the time, Willie,
That our first tryst was set!
Oh, wae's me for the loanin' green
Where we were wont to gae,—
And wae's me for the destinie,
That gart me luv thee sae!

Oh, dinna mind my words, Willie,
I downa seek to blame;
But oh, it's hard to live, Willie,
And dree a warld's shame!
Het tears are hailin' ower your cheek,
And hailin' ower your chin:
Why weep ye sae for worthlessness,
For sorrow and for sin?

I'm weary of this warld, Willie,
And sick wi' a' I see,
I canna live as I ha'e lived,
Or be as I should be.
But fauld unto your heart, Willie,
The heart that still is thine,
And kiss ance mair the white, white cheek
Ye said was red langsyne.

A stoun' gaes through my heid, Willie,
A sair stoun' through my heart;
Oh, haud me up, and let me kiss
Thy brow ere we twa pairt.
Anither, and anither yet!—
How fast my life-strings break!—
Fareweel! fareweel! through yon kirk-yard
Step lichtly for my sake!

The lav'rock in the lift, Willie,
That lilts far ower our heid,
Will sing the morn as merrilie
Abune the clay-cauld deid;
And this green turf we're sittin' on,
Wi' dew-draps shimmerin' sheen,
Will hap the heart that luvit thee
As warld has seldom seen.

But oh, remember me, Willie,
On land where'er ye be;
And oh, think on the leal, leal heart,
That ne'er luvit ane but thee!
And oh, think on the cauld, cauld mools
That file my yellow hair;
That kiss the cheek, and kiss the chin
Ye never sall kiss mair!

Glenara.

H! heard ye yon pibroch sound sad in the gale,
Where a band cometh slowly with weeping and wail?
'Tis the chief of Glenara laments for his dear;
And her sire and the people are called to her bier.

Glenara came first, with the mourners and shroud;
Her kinsmen they followed, but mourned not aloud:
Their plaids all their bosoms were folded around;
They marched all in silence, they looked on the ground.

In silence they reached, over mountain and moor,
To a heath where the oak-tree grew lonely and hoar;
"Now here let us place the gray stone of her cairn;
Why speak ye no word?" said Glenara the stern.

"And tell me, I charge you, ye clan of my spouse!
Why fold ye your mantles, why cloud ye your brows?"
So spake the rude chieftain. No answer is made,
But each mantle unfolding a dagger displayed.

"I dreamt of my lady, I dreamt of her shroud,"
Cried a voice from the kinsmen, all wrathful and loud;
"And empty that shroud and that coffin did seem.
Glenara! Glenara! now read me my dream."

Oh! pale grew the cheek of that chieftain, I ween,
When the shroud was unclosed, and no lady was seen!
When a voice from the kinsmen spoke louder in scorn,—
'Twas the youth who had loved the fair Ellen of Lorne:

"I dreamt of my lady, I dreamt of her grief,
I dreamt that her lord was a barbarous chief;
On a rock of the ocean fair Ellen did seem.
Glenara! Glenara! now read me my dream!"

Their Angels.

MY heart is lonely as heart can be,
And the cry of Rachel goes up from me,
For the tender faces unforgot
Of the little children that are not;
Altho' I know
They are all in the land where I shall go.

I want them close in the dear old way;
But life goes forward and will not stay,
And He who made it has made it right:
Yet I miss my darlings out of my sight.
Altho' I know
They are all in the land where I shall go.

Only one has died. Here is one small mound
Violet-heaped, in the sweet grave-ground;
Twenty years they have bloomed and spread
Over the little baby head;
And oh, I know
She is safe in the land where I shall go.

Not dead; only grown and gone away,
The hair of my darling is turning gray
That was golden once in the days so dear,

Over for many and many a year.
Yet I know—I know—
She's a child in the land where I shall go.

My bright brave boy is a grave-eyed man
Facing the world as a worker can;
But I think of him now as I had him then,
And I lay his cheek to my heart again,
And so, I know
I shall have him there where we both shall go.

Out from the Father, and into life:
Back to His breast from the ended strife,
And the finished labor. I hear the word
From the lips of Him who was Child and Lord,
And I know that so
It shall be in the land where we all shall go.

Given back—with the gain. The secret this
Of the blessed kingdom of children is!
My mother's arms are waiting for me;
I shall lay my head on my Father's knee;
For so, I know
I'm a child myself where I shall go.

The world is troublous and hard and cold,
And men and women grow grey and old:
But behind the world is an inner place
Where yet their angels behold God's face,
And lo! we know
That only *the children* can see Him so!

My Neighbor's Confession.

(After she had been fortunate.)

YES, this is what my neighbor said that night,
In the still shadow of her stately house
(Fortune came to her when her head was white),
What time dark leaves were weird in withering boughs,
And each late rose sighed with its latest breath,
"This sweet world is too sweet to end in death."

But this is what my neighbor said to me:
I grieved my youth away for that or this.
I had upon my hand the ring you see,
With pretty babies in my arms to kiss,
And one man said I had the sweetest eyes,
He was quite sure, this side of Paradise.

But then our crowded cottage was so small,
And spacious grounds would blossom full in sight;
Then one would fret me with an India shawl,
And one flash by me in a diamond's light;
And one would show me yards of precious lace,
And one look coldly from her painted face.

I did not know that I had everything
Till — I remembered it. Ah me! ah me!
I, who had ears to hear the wild birds sing,
And eyes to see the violets. It must be

A bitter fate that jewels the gray hair,
Which once was golden and had flowers to wear.

In the old house, in my old room, for years,
The haunted cradle of my little ones gone
Would hardly let me look at it for tears.
. . . Oh, my lost nurslings! I stay on and on,
Only to miss you from the empty light
Of my lone fire — with my own grave in sight.

In the old house, too, in its own old place,
Handsome and young, and looking toward the gate,
Through which it flushed to meet me, is a face
For which, ah me! I nevermore shall wait —
For which, ah me! I wait forever, I
Who, for the hope of it, can surely die.

Young men write gracious letters here to me,
That ought to fill this mother heart of mine.
The youth in this one crowds all Italy!
This glimmers with the far Pacific's shine.
The first poor little hand that warmed my breast
Wrote this, — the date is old; you know the rest.

Oh, if I only could have back my boys,
With their lost gloves and books for me to find,
Their scattered playthings and their pleasant noise!
I sit here in the splendor, growing blind,
With hollow hands that backward reach and ache
For the sweet trouble which the children make.

Weariness.

O LITTLE feet! that such long years
Must wander on through hopes and fears,
Must ache and bleed beneath your load
I, nearer to the wayside inn,
Where toil shall cease and rest begin,
Am weary thinking of your road.

O little hands! that weak or strong,
Have still to serve or rule so long,
Have still so long to give or ask:
I, who so much with book and pen
Have toiled among my fellow men,
Am weary thinking of your task.

O little hearts! that throb and beat
With such impatient, feverish heat,
Such limitless and strong desires;
Mine that so long has glowed and burned,
With passions into ashes turned,
Now covers and conceals its fires.

* * * * *

O little souls! as pure and white,
And crystalline as rays of light
Direct from heaven, their source divine;
Refracted through the mist of years
How red my setting sun appears,
How lurid looks this soul of mine!

The Mother's Reproof.

A LIGHT footfall on the sounding floor,
And a tiny face peeps in at the door,
"Ah, mamma, I've found you out at last;
Why did you shut you in so fast?
Mamma, dolly has lost her shoe,
I can't find it anywhere; come and look too."
I laid down my pen with numerous sighs,
And started on this new enterprise;
Search and research were all in vain,
Till a bright thought was born in my brain.
I opened the oven door, and lo!
There lay the shoe as black as a sloe!
Laid in a patty-pan, baked for a pie,
"You've ruined your dolly's shoe," cried I;
She simply arched her eyebrows, when
She answered, "Make her another, then."
Vainly I seek some quiet nook,
In which to hide with my pen or book;
Vainly, for each new-found retreat
Is still invaded by pattering feet;
Pattering feet, and demands like these—
"Mamma, a pencil and ink, if you please;
See, I am coming to sit down by you;
Mamma is writing, I want to write, too."
Till a spirit that nature had never endowed
With marvelous patience, made murmur loud:

"At such a lot I may well repine,
Ne'er was more absolute thralldom than mine."

This, in the day of my pride and strength;
The coveted freedom came at length,
Came, and it lay on my spirit sore,
No pattering feet on the silent floor!
Quiet and leisure, could that suffice,
Quiet and leisure at such a price!
My favorite authors in vain invite;
"No little face will intrude to-night;"
I turned to my needle, the arrowy grief
That pierced me, on viewing the half-formed leaf,
On a little garment that ne'er will be worn;
Well I remember the sorrowful morn,
When two little arms were over it placed
And I threw it aside in petulant haste.
Mothers, weighed down with a mother's care,
Thinking your burdens too great to bear,
Tempted your hearts at their lot to repine,
Could ye but fathom the sorrow of mine!
Mothers, whose little ones round you throng,
Cherish them, sing to them all the day long.

Ye may rejoice, but never I,
Whose hopes entombed with my darling lie.
O joyless mother! O gairish sun!
O coveted wealth that the grave has won!
In this empty world I find no part—
Where shall I go with my breaking heart?

Why sinks not my frame beneath the stroke?
With anguish no words can depict I *woke!*
She lay there beside me in slumber mild,
My lost, and recovered, and *living* child!
Nor yet had the light of morning broke,
But her eyes to the touch of my lips awoke.
She marveled to see the smiles and tears
That greeted her waking: "Dearest of dears,
Mother and you will be merry to-day;
You shall help me write, and I'll help you play;
Dolly shall have two pairs of new shoes,
And anything else that my darling may choose."
The little arms around me were thrown,
The little breast heaved against my own;
Ye only, who thus have suffered, may guess
The hallowed rapture of that caress!

Lost and Found.

I SHALL lose this life! it will disappear,
With its wonderful mystery;
Some day it will move no longer here,
But will vanish silently;
But I know I shall find it again once more,
In a beauty no song hath told;
It will meet with me at the golden door,
And round me forever fold.

Mother, Home, and Heaven.

I'VE sometimes wondered, when my path has led
My feet reluctant into stranger's halls,
When, for a season, I have been deprived
Of the endearments and delights of home;
When a self-exile from the dear fireside,
To duty sacrificing all its joys,
I've dwelt 'mong strangers — strangers still, though kind
Often, and pitying as friends could be —
I've sometimes wondered if, of all earth's words,
There were three sweeter, dearer to the heart,
Than Mother, Home, and Heaven. I have thought
That if my hand were better skilled to wield
The artist's pencil than the poet's pen,
'Twould be my life task to produce a work
That should make every heart grow soft with tears
At thought of those three simple, soulful words.

"Mother!" The utterance of that sweet word
Turns back the wheels of Time, and I am left
A helpless infant on my mother's breast.
I see her smile of love, I feel the kiss
That falls as gently as a breath of balm
Upon my brow. Then, as in after time,
I'm bowing at her knee, my lisping tongue
Repeating the sweet prayer she taught me there.
And then I listen to her kind reproof,
Her words of counsel, and my heart is stirred

With strange desires and longings to "be good."
And now I'm roaming through the wild beech-woods,
Chasing the merry squirrel to his nest;
Mocking the glee of singing birds or bees,
Swinging like a wild thing high in the air
On some long grapevine, wading in the pond
Where the tall sycamores reach out their arms,
And clap their hands that play with my wild hair.
I'm hunting buttercups amid the grass
Of the broad meadow. I am flitting here
And there in the wild, wondrous "sugar camp,"
Dipping my sun-browned face in every "trough"
To test the sweetness of its liquid store.
And then I'm going home — home to the rest,
And peace, and quiet, of the broad home hearth.
I lay my head upon my mother's knee,
And tell her all the wondrous sights I've seen.
And mother kisses me and gravely says
That I'm "too wild romping for a girl."
And this is home — for "home is where mother is —"
And round me are the faces that I love.

"Home!" The pure shrine where willing spirits bend
And offer grateful incense; where the cares
And trials and commotions of the world
Should never come; the castle where a man
May shut himself securely and defy
The angry turmoils of the world without.
Home is a refuge where the weary heart
Turns with its burden; where the weary feet

Turn from their wandering up and down the world;
Where the wrecked hopes of ruined, wasted lives
Are brought to be entombed from the world's gaze.
How many a soldier in the prison cell,
Or gloomy hospital, or battle din,
When life was ebbing out and death was near,
Has cried in vain, "Oh, that I might go home!"
How many a sailor, wrecked upon the sea,
Has turned his longing eye to the blue line
That tells him home is near; and with the thought
Of home to cheer, yet sadden him, gone down
To find a watery grave beneath the deep!
How many of earth's lost and fallen ones
Have been reclaimed by thoughts and hopes of home!
Home! It is where the heart is, and I've thought
That this is why we are not to lay up
Our treasures here on earth. Our Father knows
That we are strangers here, earth not our home;
And knowing that if we gather treasure here
Our fallen hearts will seek no better home,
He in his loving care hath made for us
A mansion suited to our souls' great wants,
And hath established it in heaven, where we
May store our treasures for eternal use.
And here at last shall all our wanderings end,
At home in heaven. How do our bosoms burn
With rapture in anticipation sweet
Of that blessed land, where toil, and grief, and pain,
And sighing, shall no more annoy our hearts!
Oh, there will be no tears, no weary feet,

No crushed hearts wearing out with ceaseless pain,
No long, slow, hopeless days and sleepless nights,
No heavy burdens hid 'neath cloaks of mirth
And thus made harder to be borne; no lives
Wrecked, wasted, ruined, no cold, curious eyes,
Nor scornful smiles in that pure, sinless land.
But there our Father wipes away all tears,
And perfect bliss atones for all the woes
And crosses that make earth a dreary place.

"Home is wnere mother is," but mother's hand
Cannot remove the burden from our hearts,
Though by her tenderness she may allay
The bitter pain and make it easier.
And we may turn to home and mother when
The world deals harshly by us, and may find
A refuge from its turmoils for awhile.
But mother dies, the roof-tree is torn down,
And we are shelterless amid the wild.
"Heaven is where God is," and we may go
Weary and soiled, and travel-worn and tired,
And we may leave it all without the gate.
And when we enter through the shining door
Our Father will receive us, dry our tears,
Clothe us and crown us, and one welcoming smile
Will fill us with such perfect ecstasy
That all that we have suffered and endured
Will seem as trifles not to be compared
To the exceeding glory of our great reward.

"After the Burial."

YES, faith is a goodly anchor,
Where skies are as sweet as a psalm,
At the bows it lolls so stalwart,
In bluff broad shouldered calm

And when o'er breakers to leeward
The scattered surges are hurled,
It may keep our head to the tempest,
With its grip on the base of the world.

But after the shipwreck, tell me
What help in its iron thews,
Still true to the broken hawser,
Deep down among seaweed and ooze?

In the breaking gulfs of sorrow,
When the helpless feet stretch out,
And you find in the deeps of darkness
No footing so solid as doubt—

Then better one spar of memory;
One broken plank of the past—
That our poor hearts may cling to,
Tho' hopeless of shore at last.

To the spirit its splendid conjectures,
To the heart its sweet despair,
Its tears on the thin worn locket,
With its beauty of deathless hair.

Immortal! I feel it, and know it;
Who doubts it of such as she!
But that's the pang's very secret—
Immortal away from me.

There is a little ridge in the church-yard,
'Twould scarce stay a child in its race,
But to me and my thoughts 'tis wider
Than the star-sown vague of space.

Your logic, my friend, is perfect;
Your moral most drearily true;
But the earth that stops my darling's ears,
Makes mine insensate, too.

Console if you will, I can bear it,
'Tis a well-meant alms of breath;
But not all the preaching since Adam
Has made death other than death.

Communion in spirit! Forgive me,
But I who am sickly and weak
Would give all my income from dreamland
For her rose-leaf palm on my cheek.

That little shoe in the corner,
So worn and wrinkled and brown,
Its motionless hollow confronts you,
And argues your wisdom down.

To my Mother.

FULL twenty years have passed away—
They seem now but a single day—
Since last I saw thee, mother.
But when I started on my way,
I truly did not mean to stay
So very long a time away—
Away from thee, dear mother.

But I was then a wayward child,
And very young and very wild;
Alas? thou know'st it, mother.
And high my passions wine did foam,
I could no longer stay at home,
I wanted through the world to roam,
Away from thee, dear mother.

I knew not then what now I know,
That through the world where'er you go,
You find no second mother.
I thought then in my foolish mind,
With wild romantic notions blind,
That everywhere I was to find
Human hearts as warm and kind
As the one I left behind—
As thine, thou kindest mother.

And so I rushed into the world,
By stormy, fiery passions whirled
Away from thee, dear mother;

And on the whirlwind did I ride,
Without a goal, without a guide,
Wandering far and wandering wide,
And always farther from thy side—
Thy side, my blessed mother.

I roamed and roamed the world around,
But what I sought I never found,
I never found it, mother.
I sought for nothing more nor less
Than an ideal happiness–
Sought paradise in the wilderness,
And could not find it, mother.

I sought a heart, I sought a soul,
I sought a love, intense and whole—
A deathless love, O mother!
I sought for Joy's unpoisoned wine,
I sought for Glory's stainless shine,
I sought for Wisdom's drossless mine,
Sought men and women all divine,
And never found them, mother.

And wearied by the endless race,
And sickened by the fruitless chase,
Old, cold, and faint, O mother!
With breaking heart and darkened eye,
I bade my soaring hopes good-by,
And weary both of earth and sky,
I laid me down and yearned to die—
To die and rest, O mother.

But He whose name be ever blest,
Who loves us most and knows us best,
Took pity on me, mother;
And from his own effulgence bright
Into my soul's abysmal night,
He sent, imparting strength and sight,
A quickening ray of heavenly light
And *peace—His* peace, O mother.

And now life's stormy days are past;
My weary bark at last, at last,
Has found its haven, mother.
By wild desires no more distrest,
No passion now can heat my breast,
Save *one*, which has outlived the rest—
The earliest, deepest, and the best—
My love for thee, dear mother.

But thou hast left this vale of tears,
And winged thy way to better spheres,
Far from thy child, O mother!
The boundless gratitude I owe,
The heart-warm love I fain would show,
The tender cares I should bestow,
My thousand debts of long ago—
I cannot pay them here below,
I cannot pay thee, mother.

But thou, so gentle and so mild,
Thou wilt not spurn thy erring child,
Thou wilt forgive me, mother.

Behold, the days are running fast;
I'm with the old already classed;
Soon will the darksome vale be passed
Then comes the hour when at last
My spirit arms around thee cast,
I *shall* repay thee, mother!

Spirit Voices.

WHEN the evening shades are creeping
Silently o'er vale and hill,
And the stars above are keeping
Tireless watch o'er earth so still,
Spirits from the bending willow,
Swayed by zephyrs to and fro,
Nightly seek my lonely pillow
With their whispers soft and low,
Breathing strains of long ago.

Strange, sweet music, sometimes bringing
From my heart an answering sigh,
Sometimes gently, sweetly singing
Childhood's early lullaby.
Joyous, then, I seek a token
Of the being whom they sing,
But the charm is rudely broken,
And no loving form they bring,
But depart on viewless wing.

Even now those spirit voices
Fall upon my list'ning ear,

And my saddened heart rejoices
As their welcome strains I hear;
And I catch from one long cherished
Tones of love that well I know,
Till I quite forget she perished,
And with tears was buried low
'Neath the willow long ago.

My Mother's Grave.

MY mother's grave, my mother's grave!
O! dreamless is her slumber there,
And drowsily the banners wave
O'er her that was so chaste and fair!
Yea, love is dead and memory faded!
But when the dew is on the brake,
And silence sleeps on earth and sea,
And mourners weep, and ghosts awake,
Oh, then she cometh back to me,
In her cold beauty darkly shaded!

I cannot guess her face or form;
But what to me is form or face?
I do not ask the weary worm
To give me back each buried grace
Of glistening eyes, or trailing tresses!
I only feel that she is here,
And that we meet, and that we part;
And that I drink within mine ear,

And that I clasp around my heart,
Her sweet still voice and soft caresses!

Not in the waking thought by day,
Not in the sightless dream by night,
Do the mild tones and glances play,
Of her who was my cradle's light!
But in some twilight of calm weather
She glides, by fancy dimly wrought,
A glittering cloud, a darkling beam,
With all the quiet of a thought,
And all the passion of a dream,
Linked in a golden spell together.

Patchwork.

MY lady's hair is white as milk,
And dainty lace is o'er it spread,
Lace fine as any spider's web;
Her dress is of the richest silk,
Her eyes are tender, bright and blue,
And she sits sewing all day through:
Sits sewing with a patience rare
A cushion tinted manifold;
Of richest satins, cloth of gold,
And softest velvets wondrous fair:
Of glancing silks and rich brocade,
In cunning skill and beauty laid.

Thus sewing all the long days through,
She said, I make my story, dears—

A story full of smiles and tears.
Amber and crimson, white and blue,
Bright greens and pinks and purple pale,
Are but the chapters of my tale.

"This dainty square of rosy hue
Is from the dress I wore that day
Your father stole my heart away;
This white, with silver threaded through,
My wedding suit. What days divide
The widow from the happy bride!

"This sable velvet, this, this, that,
Are portions of some splendid vest
(Your father still was nobly dress'd);
This circle was a rich cravat;
I had a dress the same that year
He went to Washington, my dear!

"My Harry's tie of sailor blue
And Charley's crimson sash are here,
And your first ball dress, Mabel dear:
Sweet baby Grace you never knew,
She died so soon — this tiny square,
Is from the bow that bound her hair.

"So, darlings, let me dream and sew:
These strips of pink and gray and gold
The story of my life unfold:
And as the still days come and go,
The happy Past comes back to me,
In all Love's tender fantasy."

Saratoga, 1777-1877.

HAIL, day of Saratoga, an hundred years ago!
When Freedom's hosts for Freedom struck a world-resounding blow!
Hail, day of Saratoga, with fadeless glory bright,
That cheered Columbia's struggling cause with victory's dawning light!

Ah, sore was Freedom's peril when Brooklyn's fight was lost,
And o'er New York, with all her forts, the foe's proud banner tossed;
When Washington and Congress as fugitives were driven,
When treason's voice was loud and bold, the country almost riven!

Then from New York marched Clinton, from Canada Burgoyne,
Across the land from North to South their hostile powers to join,
To sunder brave New England from all the Middle realm,
And so from lake to ocean the patriot hope o'erwhelm.

Ah, well the Briton plotted that wide and grand campaign,
That stretched from blue Ontario to silvery Champlain;
St. Leger, from Oswego, to sweep fair Mohawk's vale,
And Baume to smite New Hampshire, and scour the mountain trail.

Burgoyne, with power o'erwhelming, his conquering center led,
And swept Champlain triumphant from its outlet to its head;
Stout old Ticonderoga before his genius fell,
And Hubbardton and Skenesborough his vigor learned too well.

Ah, then, what nameless anguish rent Schuyler's patriot breast,
As, backward from Fort Edward, by power resistless pressed,
He hurled whole forests tangled across the victor's way,
And heard, o'er savage war-whoops, the shriek of Jane M'Crea!

Ah, not in vain, fair martyr, arose thy virgin wail!
Thy death-shriek thrilled New England, and swelled on every gale
That wafted westward, southward, where'er the tidings came,
Till Schuyler's call and Jeannie's woe set all the land aflame!

Then fled the foiled St. Leger with all his savage war,
Checked at Oriskany, where bled the hero Herkimer,
And then from stout Fort Schuyler by valiant Ganesvoort hurled,
And fiery Willett, deathless names, who first yon flag unfurled.

And then Stark won, at Bennington, by Walloomscoik's fair meadow;
The "red coats" ere that night *were* "ours," nor "Molly Stark" a "widow"!
Then rang the land with jubilee; then rose the mighty rally;
And patriot hosts by thousands swarmed and filled the Hudson's valley.

Ah, then how toiled the foeman, for bold and strong was he,
Humane and valiant as a knight, and brave as brave could be;
With both wings crushed, retreat cut off, and dreaded famine nigh,
He fought, as only Britons fight, to conquer or to die.

Then came the strife of giants, with Gates in highest place,
To grasp the victory well prepared by Schuyler, and God's grace,
While, more than victor, he whose toil had made the triumph sure,
Wronged, robbed, still served in patriot truth, great, valiant, generous, pure.

Then burst the fiery tempest o'er calm Stillwater, rolled
Where flows majestic Hudson 'mid autumn's flame and gold;
But fields and woods were crimsoned with more than autumn's flame,
Where hero souls, through blood and fire, went up to deathless fame.

There toiled great Kosciusko to build the rampart strong,
A name resplendent through two worlds in glory and in song;
There Schuyler's wisdom counseled, and prudent Lincoln planned,
And Arnold led the battle storm in fury wild and grand.

Sore wronged, but not yet traitor, was he that day who blazed,
A meteor in war's dreadful van, twixt hostile hosts amazed!
An envious chief defying, without command obeyed,
Hailed, cheered, and thundering on the foe with lightning in his blade!

Nor less shone noble Morgan, Virginia's valiant son,
Who erst on Braddock's field endured with glorious Washington;
Cool, brave, self-poised, sagacious, he led his rifle host,
And where they crashed, the foeman knew the battle more than lost.

And Stark fought there, and Learned, Poor, Warner, Dearborn, Brooks,
The Livingstons, Van Courtlandt, the Glovers, Tenbroecks, Cooks,
Heroes from all New England, New York, New Jersey too,
Militia, plowboys, volunteers, and Continental blue.

Brave were the sons of Britain, Burgoyne himself in front,
Not lingering, dubious, in the rear, but bearing war's dread brunt;

Heroic, gallant Fraser, the battle's soul and guide,
With Phillips, Powell, Hamilton, and Breyman, vet'rans tried.

And there was valiant Riedesel, of Brunswick's noble line,
Whose hero wife shone 'mid the strife, an angel, half divine;
The brave young Earl Balcarras, and Ackland brave, who fell,
Whose Harriet dared night, storm and wave, with love no lyre can tell.

What song can chant the brave deeds of those twin battles dire,
When war turned day to darkness, and lit the night with fire,
When Behmus' Heights seemed girt with flame, and down the Mid Ravine
Mill creek with blood the turf o'erflowed, that erst at morn was green?

Ah, dreadful was that combat at Freeman's Clearing urged,
Where, wave on wave, four awful hours the sulphurous carnage surged;
And dreadful where the wheat-field was reapt by fiery hail,
Or Morgan, Arnold, smote the foe as with the whirlwind's flail.

Huzzahs for gallant Cilley and his five times captured gun,
Huzzas for Arnold, Morgan, by whom the field was won!
Tears, tears for noble Fraser, by patriot Murphy slain.
While Freedom's generous minute-guns boomed dirges o'er the plain.

Ah, sore it grieved the Briton to stoop his haughty crest,
And bow his lion spirit to the eagle of the West;
Ten days he waited, parleyed, and longed for Vaughn in vain,
Till stern Gates said, "Surrender, or my cannon blaze again."

Then came the great surrender, when thousands grounded arms,
And war relaxed his iron frown, and stilled his loud alarms;
Burgoyne gave up his sword to Gates, his men marched Yankee-doodle,
And the well-whipped British lion was forlorn Britannia's poodle!

And then the great rejoicing swept o'er a land inspired,
And freedom, phœnix-like, arose from dust and death new-fired;
The joy was like the whirlwinds, like thunders of the sea,
Swelled heavenward in thanksgiving the anthems of the free.

That was the people's victory, no Hannibal was there,
No Bonaparte or Wellington, to claim the lion's share;
But brigadiers and colonels and captains won the day,
With ranks of men who fought for home and freedom, not for pay.

That was Jehovah's victory; I saw his chariot shine,
When Liberty in sacred wrath rode down the battle's line;
And nation answered nation along the old world's shore,
And cheered Columbia's rising star with every billow's roar.

Then France held out her scepter to freedom's chosen sage,
To him who snatched the lightning and quelled the Thunderer's rage;
Great Washington, victorious at last laid down the sword,
And peace and union, hand in hand, stood up and praised the Lord.

Pile then the well-squared granite and time-defying brass,
To tell long generations and ages, as they pass,
How freemen's blood, like water, bedewed this holy sod,
That never, never, Freedom's sons might kiss a tyrant's rod.

And while yon mighty river rolls onward to the sea,
And these green hills above it tower, the bulwarks of the free,
So long wave yon proud banner, to foeman never furled,
So long be Saratoga a name to thrill the world.

Independence Bell, July 4, 1776.

THERE was tumult in the city,
In the quaint old Quaker's town,—
And the streets were rife with people,
Pacing, restless, up and down;—
People, gathering at corners,
Where they whispered, each to each,
And the sweat stood on their temples,
With the earnestness of speech.

As the bleak Atlantic currents
Lash the wild Newfoundland shore,
So they beat against the State House,—
So they surged against the door;
And the mingling of their voices
Made a harmony profound,
Till the quiet street of Chestnut
Was all turbulent with sound.

"Will they do it?"—"Dare they do it?"—
"Who is speaking?"—"What's the news?"—
'What of Adams?"—"What of Sherman?"—
"Oh, God grant they won't refuse!"—

"Make some way there!"—"Let me nearer!"—
"I am stifling!"—"Stifle, then!
When a nation's life's at hazard,
We've no time to think of men!"

So they beat against the portal,
Man and woman, maid and child;
And the July sun in heaven,
On the scene, looked down and smiled;
The same sun that saw the Spartan
Shed his patriot blood in vain,
Now beheld the soul of freedom,
All unconquered, rise again.

See! see! The dense crowd quivers
Through all its lengthy line,
As the boy, beside the portal,
Looks forth to give the sign!
With his small hands upward lifted,
Breezes dallying with his hair,
Hark! with deep, clear intonation,
Breaks his young voice on the air.

Hushed the people's swelling murmur,
List the boy's strong joyous cry!
"*Ring!*" he shouts, "RING! *Grandpa*,
RING! OH, RING FOR LIBERTY!"
And, straightway, at the signal,
The old bellman lifts his hand,
And sends the good news, making
Iron music through the land.

How they shouted! What rejoicing!
How the old bell shook the air,
Till the clang of freedom ruffled
The calm, gliding Delaware!
How the bonfires and the torches
Illumed the night's repose,
And from the flames, like Phœnix,
Fair Liberty arose!

That old bell now is silent,
And hushed its iron tongue,
But the spirit it awakened
Still lives — forever young.
And, while we greet the sunlight,
On the fourth of each July,
We'll ne'er forget the bellman,
Who, 'twixt the earth and sky,
Rang out Our Independence;
Which, please God, *shall never die!*

At Port Royal.

1862.

THE tent-lights glimmer on the land,
The ship-lights on the sea;
The night-wind smooths with drifting sand
Our track on lone Tybee.

At last our grating keels outslide,
Our good boats forward swing;
And while we ride the land-locked tide,
Our negroes row and sing.

For dear the bondman holds his gifts
Of music and of song:
The gold that kindly Nature sifts
Among his sands of wrong;

The power to make his toiling days
And poor home-comforts please;
The quaint relief of mirth that plays
With sorrow's minor keys.

Another glow than sunset's fire
Has filled the West with light,
Where field and garner, barn and byre,
Are blazing through the night.

The land is wild with fear and hate
The rout runs mad and fast;

From hand to hand, from gate to gate,
The flaming brand is passed.

The lurid glow falls strong across
Dark faces broad with smiles;
Not theirs the terror, hate, and loss.
That fire yon blazing piles.

With oar-strokes timing to their song,
They weave in simple lays
The pathos of remembered wrong,
The hope of better days,—

The triumph-note that Miriam sung,
The joy of uncaged birds:
Softening with Afric's mellow tongue
Their broken Saxon words.

SONG OF THE NEGRO BOATMEN.

Oh, praise an' tanks! De Lord he come
To set de people free;
An' massa tink it day ob doom,
An' we ob jubilee.
De Lord dat heap de Red Sea waves
He jus' as 'trong as den;
He say de word: we las' night slaves;
To-day, de Lord's freemen.
De yam will grow, de cotton blow,
We'll hab de rice an' corn;
Oh nebber you fear, if nebber you hear
De driver blow his horn!

Ole massa on he trabbels gone;
He leaf de land behind:
De Lord's bref blow him furder on,
Like corn-shuck in de wind.
We own de hoe, we own de plough,
We own de hands dat hold;
We sell de pig, we sell de cow,
But nebber chile be sold.
De yam will grow, de cotton blow
We'll hab de rice an' corn;
Oh nebber you fear, if nebber you hear
De driver blow his horn!

We pray de Lord: he gib us signs
Dat some day we be free;
De norf-wind tell it to de pines,
De wild-duck to de sea;
We tink it when de church-bell ring,
We dream it in de dream;
De rice-bird mean it when he sing,
De eagle when he scream.
De yam will grow, de cotton blow,
We'll hab de rice an' corn;
Oh nebber you fear, if nebber you hear
De driver blow his horn!

We know de promise nebber fail,
An' nebber lie de word;
So like de 'postles in de jail,
We waited for de Lord:

An' now he open ebery door,
An' trow away de key;
He tink we lub him so before,
We lub him better free.
De yam will grow, de cotton blow,
He'll gib de rice an' corn;
Oh nebber you fear, if nebber you hear
De driver blow his horn!

So sing our dusky gondoliers;
And with a secret pain,
And smiles that seem akin to tears,
We hear the wild refrain.

We dare not share the negro's trust,
Nor yet his hope deny;
We only know that God is just,
And every wrong shall die.

Rude seems the song; each swarthy face
Flame-lighted, ruder still:
We start to think that hapless race
Must shape our good or ill;

That laws of changeless justice bind
Oppressor with oppressed;
And, close as sin and suffering joined,
We march to Fate abreast.

Sing on, poor hearts! your chant shall be
Our sign of blight or bloom,—
The Vala-song of Liberty,
Or death-rune of our doom!

Why Did I Let Him Go?

ONCE I sat within the twilight,
With my Mary on my knee,
Waiting for the manly footfall
That brought ever joy to me.
I was silent as the sleeper
That was folded to my breast,
But my heart was quick and earnest,
Throbbing with a strange unrest.

Other hearts than mine were earnest,
Other brows than mine aflame,
For a blast, as from a trumpet,
On the winds of evening came.
All the air was filled with murmurs
Men were hast'ning to and fro,
Talking of the flag — of traitors,
With their voices stern and low.

And God heard them up in heaven,
And he flung the banner forth,
Red, and white, and blue, and starry,
O'er the East, and West, and North.
And I heard him out of heaven
As he said, "Lo, it is I!
Where this banner waves I lead you,
Will you dare for it to die?"

"Yes, I dare," said one beside me,
And my heart knew well the tone;
God had spoken — *he* had answered,
Could I dare to wait alone?
I was silent — silent — silent —
While the red upon the blue
Burned into the distant heaven —
Dare I answer — answer true?

Dare I pluck the hand uplifted,
With its oath to God above,
Back to earth again to give it
Nothing but a woman's love?
Dare I take that heart so beating,
As it answered the Divine,
Saying, "Live for me forever —
All thy life is only mine"?

Dare I stand between Jehovah
And that earnest, manly soul —
Place my will o'er his that holdeth
Life and death in his control?
Then I answered, as I lifted
From my baby's face my own,
"I am but an earthly creature —
He is God upon his throne —

"He has called — I can but bless thee —
Go! where'er that banner leads,
Mark the pathway of a soldier
With a Christian hero's deeds.

Give the life — Oh, God may give it
Back to me at last again,
When the olive bears her blossoms,
And when joy is born of pain.

"But if he demand the utmost,
And thy brow must whiter grow,
Shaded by magnolia blossoms
From the southern sunlight's glow;
Then — but ah! I can but bless thee —
Where he leads thy footsteps go.
There's a tree within God's garden
Yielding balm for human woe."
Thus he left me — my beloved —
This is why I let him go;
When God calleth from the heavens,
Who will dare to answer "No"?

Once again I sit at twilight,
With our Mary on my knee,
Thinking of my soldier marching
With the armies of the free.
The same banner still is waving
In the sunset sky above,
Over *him* the type of victory,
Over me forever, love.
And the voice that called him speaketh
Unto me as to a friend,
"Not alone, for I am with thee
Evermore unto the end."

July 2, 1881.

FLASHED swift along the lightning's breath
In awesome horror dark as death.

From lip to lip the terror ran,
Strong sobbing shook the bearded man.

Sweet woman-faces paled with ire,
Flags drooped in grief from ship and spire,

And many a voice cried, "Would that I
To save a life so dear, might die!"

The fell assassin's daring hand
Had touched the noblest in the land.

The wounds which smote our leader low
Filled streets and farms and homes with woe,

And up from sorrow and despair
There rose to heaven a storm of prayer,—

The nation's cry of agony,
Bowed in its dark Gethsemane—

"O Father, save him for his own,
The hearts that else will break alone;

"And save him for his people's need,
The people's son, in word and deed.

"And save him for thy mercy's sake,
And for the mighty truths at stake."

Oh, shall he live, or must he die?
We gaze upon the silent sky,—

The fair blue summer sky that shines
Alike, o'er hope that slow declines,—

And o'er the vivid hopes that flame
To glad thanksgiving — shines the same.

Ah well! a changeless God on high
Is reigning far above the sky.

And not without a Father's care
He hears our million-chorded prayer.

"His will be done," our hero said,
So grandly was he comforted.

Nay, God shall bring the right to pass,
Though man must fade like fading grass.

And we, who are but feeble dust,
Will in His wide compassion trust.

When This Old Flag Was New.

WHEN this old flag was new,
The manners and the men
That are so petty now,
Methinks, were better then.
The straits that we were in,
The work there was to do,
All hearts and hands made strong,
When this old flag was new.

A brave old race they were
Who peopled then the land,—
No man of them ashamed
To show his horny hand;
Hands that had grasped the sword
Now drew the furrow true;
For honored was the plow,
When this old flag was new.

The farmer tilled the ground
His father tilled before;
If it supplied his wants,
He asked for nothing more.
Thankful for what he had,
On Sunday, in his pew,
He sang a hymn of praise,
When this old flag was new.

He wore a homespun suit
His wife and daughters made;
'Twas dyed with butternuts,
And, likely, old and frayed;
They dressed in calicoes,
And looked right pretty, too;
Women, not clothes, were loved,
When this old flag was new.

Men married women, then,
Who kept their healthful bloom
By working at the churn,
And at the wheel and loom;
Who could their stockings knit,
And darn, and bake, and brew;—
A housewife in each house,
When this old flag was new.

And women married men
Who did not shrink from toil,
But wrung, with sweat, their bread
From out the stubborn soil;
Whose axes felled the wood,
And where so late it grew
Did straightway build their homes,
When this old flag was new.

They lived their homely lives
The plain, old-fashioned way,—
Thanksgiving once a year,
And General Muster-day;

Town-meeting in the spring,—
Their holidays were few
And very gravely kept,
When this old flag was new.

A hardy, patient race,
Their growth was sure, if slow;
Happy in this, they had
A world wherein to grow,
Where kings and priests were not,
Nor peoples to subdue;
A continent their own,
When this old flag was new.

God bless the dear old flag!
The nation's hope and pride,
For which our fathers fought,
For which our children died;
And, long as there shall beat
A heart to freedom true,
Preserve the rights we won,
When this old flag was new.

The Relief of Lucknow.

OH, that last day in Lucknow fort!
We knew that it was the last;
That the enemy's lines crept surely on,
And the end was coming fast.

To yield to that foe meant worse than death;
And the men and we all worked on;
It was one day more of smoke and roar,
And then it would all be done.

There was one of us, a corporal's wife,
A fair, young, gentle thing,
Wasted with fever in the siege,
And her mind was wandering.

She lay on the ground, in her Scottish plaid,
And I took her head on my knee;
"When my father comes hame frae the pleugh," she said,
"Oh! then please wauken me."

She slept like a child on her father's floor,
In the flecking of woodbine-shade,
When the house-dog sprawls by the open door,
And the mother's wheel is stayed.

It was smoke and roar and powder-stench,
And hopeless waiting for death;
And the soldier's wife, like a full-tired child,
Seemed scarce to draw her breath.

I sank to sleep; and I had my dream
Of an English village-lane,
And wall and garden;—but one wild scream
Brought me back to the roar again.

There Jessie Brown stood listening
Till a sudden gladness broke
All over her face; and she caught my hand
And drew me near as she spoke:—

"The Hielanders! Oh! dinna ye hear
The slogan far awa?
The McGregors. Oh! I ken it weel;
It's the grandest o' them a'!

"God bless the bonny Hielanders!
We're saved! we're saved!" she cried;
And fell on her knees; and thanks to God
Flowed forth like a full flood-tide.

Along the battery-line her cry
Had fallen among the men,
And they started back;—they were there to die;
But was life so near them, then?

They listened for life; the rattling fire
Far off, and the far-off roar,
Were all; and the colonel shook his head,
And they turned to their guns once more.

But Jessie said, "The slogan's done;
But winna ye hear it noo.

The Campbells are comin'? It's no a dream;
Our succors hae broken through!"

We heard the roar and the rattle afar,
But the pipes we could not hear;
So the men plied their work of hopeless war,
And knew that the end was near.

It was not long ere it made its way,—
A thrilling, ceaseless sound:
It was no noise from the strife afar,
Or the sappers under ground.

It *was* the pipes of the Highlanders!
And now they played *Auld Lang Syne.*
It came to our men like the voice of God,
And they shouted along the line.

And they wept, and shook one another's hands,
And the women sobbed in a crowd;
And every one knelt down where he stood,
And we all thanked God aloud.

That happy time, when we welcomed them,
Our men put Jessie first;
And the general gave her his hand, and cheers
Like a storm from the soldiers burst.

And the pipers' ribbons and tartan streamed,
Marching round and round our line;
And our joyful cheers were broken with tears,
As the pipes played *Auld Lang Syne.*

The Old Sergeant.

"COME a little nearer, Doctor,— thank you,— let me take the cup:
Draw your chair up,— draw it closer,— just another little sup!
Maybe you may think I'm better; but I'm pretty well used up,—
Doctor, you've done all you could do, but I'm just a-going up!

"Feel my pulse, sir, if you want to, but it an't much use to try"—
"Never say that," said the Surgeon, as he smothered down a sigh;
"It will never do, old comrade, for a soldier to say die!"
"What you *say* will make no difference, Doctor, when you come to die.

"Doctor, what has been the matter?" "You were very faint, they say;
You must try to get to sleep now." "Doctor, have I been away?"
"Not that anybody knows of!" "Doctor — Doctor, please to stay!
There is something I must tell you, and you won't have long to stay!

"I have got my marching orders, and I'm ready now to go;
Doctor, did you say I fainted?— but it couldn't ha' been so,—
For as sure as I'm a Sergeant, and was wounded at Shiloh,
I've this very night been back there, on the old field of Shiloh!

"This is all that I remember: The last time the Lighter came,
And the lights had all been lowered, and the noises much the same,

He had not been gone five minutes before something called my name:
'ORDERLY SERGEANT—ROBERT BURTON!'—just that way it called my name.

"And I wondered who could call me so distinctly and so slow,
Knew it couldn't be the Lighter,—he could not have spoken so;
And I tried to answer, 'Here, sir!' but I couldn't make it go;
For I could'nt move a muscle, and I couldn't make it go!

"Then I thought: It's all a nightmare, all a humbug and a bore;
Just another foolish *grape-vine*—and it won't come any more;
But it came, sir, notwithstanding, just the same way as before:
'ORDERLY SERGEANT—ROBERT BURTON!' even plainer than before.

"That is all that I remember, till a sudden burst of light,
And I stood beside the river, where we stood that Sunday night,
Waiting to be ferried over to the dark bluffs opposite,
When the river was perdition and all hell was opposite!

"And the same old palpitation came again in all its power,
And I heard a bugle sounding, as from some celestial Tower;
And the same mysterious voice said: 'IT IS THE ELEVENTH HOUR!
ORDERLY SERGEANT—ROBERT BURTON—IT IS THE ELEVENTH HOUR!'

"Doctor Austin!—what *day* is this?" "It is Wednesday night, you know."
"Yes,—to-morrow will be New Year's, and a right good time below!

What *time* is it, Doctor Austin!" "Nearly twelve.' "Then don't you go!
Can it be that all this happened — all this — not an hour ago!

"There was where the gun-boats opened on the dark, rebellious host;
And where Webster semicircled his last guns upon the coast;
There were still the two log-houses, just the same, or else their ghost,—
And the same old transport came and took me over — or its ghost!

"And the old field lay before me all deserted far and wide;
There was where they fell on Prentiss,— there McClernand met the tide;
There was where stern Sherman rallied, and where Hurlbut's heroes died,—
Lower down, where Wallace charged them, and kept charging till he died.

"There was where Lew Wallace showed them he was of the canny kin,
There was where old Nelson thundered, and where Rousseau waded in;
There McCook sent 'em to breakfast, and we all began to win—
There was where the grape-shot took me, just as we began to win.

"Now, a shroud of snow and silence over everything was spread;
And but for this old blue mantle and the old hat on my head,
I should not have even doubted, to this moment, I was dead,—
For my footsteps were as silent as the snow upon the dead!

"Death and silence? — Death and silence! all around me as I sped!
And behold, a mighty TOWER, as if builded to the dead,—
To the heaven of the heavens, lifted up its mighty head,
Till the Stars and Stripes of heaven all seemed waving from its head!

"Round and mighty-based it towered — up into the infinite —
And I knew no mortal mason could have built a shaft so bright;
For it shone like solid sunshine; and a winding stair of light,
Wound around it and around it till it wound clear out of sight!

"And, behold, as I approached it — with a rapt and dazzled stare,—
Thinking that I saw old comrades just ascending the great Stair,—
Suddenly the solemn challenge broke of—'Halt, and who goes there!'
'I'm a friend,' I said, 'if you are.' 'Then advance, sir, to the Stair!'

"I advanced!—That sentry, Doctor, was Elijah Ballantyne!
First of all to fall on Monday, after we had formed the line:
'Welcome, my old Sergeant, welcome! Welcome by that countersign!'
And he pointed to the scar there, under this old cloak of mine!

"As he grasped my hand, I shuddered, thinking only of the grave;
But he smiled and pointed upward with a bright and bloodless glaive:
'That's the way, sir, to headquarters.' 'What headquarters!' 'Of the brave.'
'But the great Tower?' 'That,' he answered, 'is the way, sir, of the Brave!'

"Then a sudden shame came o'er me at his uniform of light;
At my own so old and tattered, and at his so new and bright;
'Ah!' said he, 'you have forgotten the new uniform to-night,—
Hurry back, for you must be here at just twelve o'clock to-night!'

"And the next thing I remember, you were sitting there, and I—
Doctor — did you hear a footstep? Hark! — God bless you all!
Good-by!
Doctor, please to give my musket and my knapsack, when I die,
To my son — my son that's coming, — he won't get here till I die!

"Tell him his old father blessed him as he never did before,—
And to carry that old musket" — Hark! a knock is at the door!—
"Till the Union" — See! it opens! — "father! father! speak once more!"
"*Bless you!*" — gasped the old, gray Sergeant, and he lay and said no more.

John Brown of Osawatomie.

JOHN BROWN in Kansas settled, like a steadfast Yankee farmer,
Brave and godly, with four sons—all stalwart men of might.
There he spoke aloud for Freedom, and the Border-strife grew warmer,
Till the Rangers fired his dwelling, in his absence in the night;
And Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Came homeward in the morning—to find his house burned down.

Then he grasped his trusty rifle, and boldly fought for Freedom;
Smote from border unto border the fierce, invading band;
And he and his brave boys vowed—so might Heaven help and speed 'em!—
They would save those grand old prairies from the curse that blights the land;
And Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Said, "Boys, the Lord will aid us!" and he shoved his ramrod down.

And the Lord *did* aid these men; and they labored day and even;
Saving Kansas from its peril, and their very lives seemed charmed;
Till the ruffians killed one son, in the blessed light of heaven—
In cold blood the fellows slew him, as he journeyed all unarmed;

Then Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Shed not a tear, but shut his teeth, and frowned a terrible frown!

Then they seized another brave boy,—not amid the heat of battle,
But in peace, behind his plowshare,—and they loaded him with chains,
And with pikes, before their horses, even as they goad their cattle,
Drove him, cruelly, for their sport, and at last blew out his brains;
Then Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Raised his right hand up to heaven, calling heaven's vengeance down.

And he swore a fearful oath, by the name of the Almighty,
He would hunt this ravening evil that had scathed and torn him so;—
He would seize it by the vitals; he would crush it day and night; he
Would so pursue its footsteps,—so return it blow for blow—
That Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Should be a name to swear by, in backwoods or in town!

Then his beard became more grizzled, and his wild blue eye grew wilder,
And more sharply curved his hawk's-nose, snuffing battle from afar;
And he and the two boys left, though the Kansas strife waxed milder,
Grew more sullen, till was over the bloody Border War,

And Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Had gone crazy, as they reckoned by his fearful glare and frown.

So he left the plains of Kansas and their bitter woes behind him,
Slipt off into Virginia, where the statesmen all are born,
Hired a farm by Harper's Ferry, and no one knew where to find him,
Or whether he'd turned parson, or was jacketed and shorn;
For Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Mad as he was, knew texts enough to wear a parson's gown.

He bought no ploughs and harrows, spades and shovels, or such trifles;
But quietly to his rancho there came, by every train,
Boxes full of pikes and pistols, and his well-beloved Sharpe's rifles;
And eighteen other madmen joined their leader there again.
Says Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
"Boys, we've got an army large enough to march and whip the town!

"Take the town, and seize the muskets, free the negroes, and then arm them;
Carry the County and the State, ay, and all the potent South;
On their own heads be the slaughter, if their victims rise to harm them
These Virginians! who believed not, nor would heed the warning mouth."
Says Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
"The world shall see a Republic, or my name is not John Brown!"

'Twas the sixteenth of October, on the evening of a Sunday,
"This good work," declared the captain, "shall be on a holy night!"
It was on a Sunday evening, and, before the noon of Monday,
With two sons, and Captain Stephens, fifteen privates — black and white,
Captain Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Marched across the bridged Potomac, and knocked the sentry down;

Took the guarded armory building, and the muskets and the cannon;
Captured all the country majors and the colonels, one by one;
Scared to death each gallant scion of Virginia they ran on,
And before the noon of Monday, I say, the deed was done.
Mad Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
With his eighteen other crazy men, went in and took the town.

Very little noise and bluster, little smell of powder, made he;
It was all done in the midnight, like the emperor's *coup d'état;*
"Cut the wires! stop the rail-cars! hold the streets and bridges!" said he,
Then declared the new Republic, with himself for guiding star,—
This Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
And the bold two thousand citizens ran off and left the town.

Then was riding and railroading, and expressing here and thither;
And the Martinsburg Sharpshooters and the Charlestown Volunteers,

And the Shepherdstown and Winchester Militia hastened whither
Old Brown was said to muster his ten thousand grenadiers
General Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Behind whose rampant banner all the North was pouring down.

But at last, 'tis said, some prisoners escaped from Old Brown's durance,
And the effervescent valor of the Chivalry broke out,
When they learned that nineteen madmen had the marvelous assurance —
Only nineteen — thus to seize the place and drive them straight about;
And Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Found an army come to take him, encamped around the town.

But to storm with all the forces we have mentioned, was too risky;
So they hurried off to Richmond for the Government Marines —
Tore them from their weeping matrons, fired their souls with Bourbon whisky
Till they battered down Brown's castle with their ladders and machines;
And Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Received three bayonet stabs, and a cut on his brave old crown.

Tallyho! the old Virginia gentry gather to the baying!
In they rushed and killed the game, shooting lustily away,
And whene'er they slew a rebel, those who came too late for slaying,
Not to lose a share of glory, fixed their bullets in his clay;

And Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Saw his sons fall dead beside him, and between them laid him down.

How the conquerors wore their laurels; how they hastened on the trial;
How Old Brown was placed, half-dying, on the Charlestown court-house floor;
How he spoke his grand oration, in the scorn of all denial;
What the brave old madman told them—these are known the country o'er.
"Hang Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,"
Said the judge, "and all such rebels!" with his most judicial frown.

But, Virginians, don't do it! for I tell you that the flagon,
Filled with blood of Old Brown's offspring, was first poured by Southern hands;
And each drop from Old Brown's life-veins, like the red gore of the dragon,
May spring up a vengeful Fury, hissing through your slave-worn lands!
And Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
May trouble you more than ever, when you've nailed his coffin down!

No More.

HUSHED be the song and the love-notes of gladness
That broke with the morn from the cottager's door,—
Muffle the tread in the soft stealth of sadness,
For one who returneth, whose chamber-lamp burneth
No more.

Silent he lies on the broad path of glory,
Where withers ungarnered the red crop of war.
Grand is his couch, though its pillows are gory,
'Mid forms that shall battle, 'mid guns that shall rattle
No more.

Soldier of Freedom, thy marches are ended,—
The dreams that were prophets of triumph are o'er;
Death with the night of thy manhood is blended,—
The bugle shall call thee, the fight shall enthrall thee
No more.

Far to the Northward the banners are dimming,
And faint comes the tap of the drummers before;
Low in the tree-tops the swallow is skimming;
Thy comrades shall cheer thee, the weakest shall fear thee
No more.

Far to the Westward the day is at vespers,
And bows down its head, like a priest, to adore;
Soldier, the twilight for thee has no whispers,
The night shall forsake thee, the morn shall awake thee
No more.

Wide o'er the plain where the white tents are gleaming,
In spectral array, like the graves they're before —
One there is empty, where once thou wert dreaming
Of deeds that are boasted, of one that is toasted
No more.

When the commander to-morrow proclaimeth
A list of the brave for the nation to store,
Thou shalt be known with the heroes he nameth,
Who wake from their slumbers, who answer their numbers
No more.

Hushed be the song and the love-notes of gladness
That broke with the morn from the cottager's door,—
Muffle the tread in the soft stealth of sadness,
For one who returneth, whose chamber-lamp burneth
No more.

The Sho-sho-ne Warrior.

ONCE a noble Indian warrior
Chanced to own a matchless steed,
Famous far and near for beauty,
And for its unrivaled speed.
And a Mexican who saw it
Sought to purchase it; but gold
Tempted not the brave Sho-sho-ne
That the proud steed should be sold.

Then the Mexican grew angry,
And with wily, base design,
Said within himself, "By cunning
That proud steed shall yet be mine,
And that haughty Indian warrior,
Mortified and stung with pain,
Shall entreat me to return it,
But his suing shall be vain."

So within a tangled thicket
On a lonesome, dreary night,
Trusting in his power of cunning,
And regardless of the right,
Hid he, and, as if in suffering,
Uttered forth a piteous moan,
For he knew the brave Sho-sho-ne
Rode the forest path alone.

Then the Indian dismounted,
Pitying, to offer aid,
While the Mexican, outspringing
From his covert in the glade,
On the proud steed quickly vaulting—
Triumph beaming in his eye—
Thus addressed the Indian warrior,
Who, astonished, lingered by:

"O, thou red man, haughty Indian,
Who my proffered gold did spurn,
Now you see the power of cunning,
See what stratagem can earn!
Scorning once the sum I offered,
Now thy steed is lost to thee;
Swiftly shall this far-famed courser
Speed the prairie-land for me."

"Paleface," then returned the Indian,
"Thy false moans and this dark hour
Truly have conspired against me,
I'm a victim to their power;
But I pray thee, treacherous paleface,
Since thou hast been so unjust,
Tell it not among the Indians,
Lest, perchance, they learn distrust;

"Lest when suffering appealing,
Seeks to gain a pitying ear,
They shall turn away in coldness,
Thinking of thy treachery here.

I this wrong will never mention,
Tho' it grieve my spirit sore;
Go, I pray thee — hasten, pale face,
I would never see thee more."

When the Mexican, whose feelings
Easily by words were moved,
Felt the baseness of his action
By the Indian reproved,
Then he said, "Forgive me brother,
Take thy steed, and thou shalt learn
That the virtue dwelling in thee
Makes my cheek with shame to burn.

"And whenever I am tempted
To commit an evil deed,
I will take the past's great volume,
And this chapter I will read;
And this sweet and holy memory,
Dwelling ever in my heart,
Like a monitor shall chide me
When from right I would depart."

The Patriot's Dust.

GATHER the soldier's dust!
Raise it so tenderly!
And bear it home with a holy trust
That God is good and his ways are just,
Though so hard for us to see!

Coffin the bones around,
And bear them to his home;
Then lay them softly beneath the ground,
Where Love will cherish the sacred mound,
And Friendship hither roam.

Out from the blackened land
Which murderous Treason mars,
And bear him away to his native strand,
Where he started out with a noble band,
Beneath the Stripes and Stars.

And here where he often played,
And heard the wild birds sing,
Let him calmly lie within the shade
Of the church where his sainted mother prayed,
And the Sabbath bells still ring.

Then leave the moldering form,
And let it sweetly rest;
It will rouse no more at war's alarm,
But will quietly sleep 'mid home's dear charm,
Like a babe on its mother's breast.

And when the trump of God
Shall open our eyes so dim,
We will know that the Father's chastening rod,
And the bloody path our dear one trod,
Was the best for us and for him.

Gather the soldier's dust!
Raise it so tenderly!
And bear it home with a holy trust
That God is good and his ways are just,
Though so hard for us to see!

The Dying Prisoner.

THE twilight shadows softly stole across a wintery sky.
While star by star looked lovingly from their bright halls on high,
And seemed to cheer the captive's heart with their mild, gladdening rays,
For in their light he lived again the joys of other days.

But never through the circling years that mark the march of time
Have those bright lamps of night looked down on half so dark a crime
As stains the hands and hearts of those who pent their fellowmen
In hunger, nakedness and cold, within that dismal den.

A thousand aching, breaking hearts were sighing, sobbing there,
And thousands more, for hope was o'er, had sunk in calm despair,

And some were dying, some were dead, and some with maniac's rave,
Called for the dreamless sleep of death, the quiet of the grave.

The husband wandered back again in fancy to his home,
And heard a sweet voice often ask, "When will my father come?"
He saw the tear on her pale cheek, the mother of his child;
He vainly strove to start, to speak, but only wept and smiled.

Unsheltered and unfed there lay the widow's only son,
No hope beamed in his sunken eye while dying there alone;
But still he breathed the name he loved, and then he tried to pray
That God would gently deal with her, dear mother, far away.

And O, the fitful, feverish dreams of home, and love, and joy!
He saw the spot where once he played when he was but a boy;
He saw the cot where he was born, so beautiful it seemed,
And mother, sisters, all were there,—but ah, he only dreamed!

He only waked to weep again o'er hopes forever fled,
For well he knew the morning light would find him with the dead;
"Jesus," he cried, "remember me, let thy unchanging love
Sustain my soul in this dark hour, and waft it safe above."

That prayer was heard; on rapid wing God's messengers came down;
One bore a star-gemmed, spotless robe, and one a harp and crown;
Another touched that aching brow; there came a sweet repose,
A holy calm, while angel hands those weary eyelids close;

Another softly touched a lyre, as if to give that soul
The key-note of the heavenly choir, and through his heart it stole

With magic power to soothe each fear, for every rhythmic chord
Was tuned in Paradise to tell the goodness of the Lord.

And while his dying ear was charmed with strains last heard above,
An angel, brighter than the rest, whose every look was love,
Turned, softly turned the key of life, and lo! a form divine
Merged from that wasted, grief-worn form in radiance all sublime.

Then loving eyes met eyes of love, and kind the greetings given,
While robe, and harp, and crown, adorned the royal heir of heaven,
And every gem which decked that robe was formed of earth-born tears,
The sweetest music of that harp the sighs of long, sad years.

The disembodied soul, upborne on angel wings afar,
Sped like a ray of light, and soon seemed like a distant star;
The everlasting gates of light received a welcome guest,
And numbered with the martyr-host, he shines among the blest.

The youth who bathes in pleasure's limpid stream
At well-judged intervals, feels all his soul
Nerved with recruited strength; but if too oft
He swims in sportive mazes through the flood,
It chills his languid virtue.

The Last Reveille.

Headley states, in his History of Napoleon and His Marshals, that M'Donald, while crossing the Splugen Pass with his army of fifteen thousand men, lost nearly two hundred of them, many of whom were swept away by the avalanches. A drummer, whose fall over the precipice was broken by masses of snow, reached the bottom unharmed, and for one hour beat his drum rapidly for relief. But all in vain, and he survived his fall only to die a more cruel death of cold, famine and despair.

LD Splugen's brow grew dark with storms
As brave M'Donald's staggering line—
A mass of weary, war-worn forms—
Her snowy heights began to climb.
Still boldly pressed those columns on,
While storm and wind swept fiercely past,
And "Vive l'Empereur" rang out anon,
As if to taunt the Alpine blast.

But suddenly an awful form,
Like some snow-demon hidden there,
Plunged down the mountain 'mid the storm,
While shrieks of terror rent the air.
"An avalanche!" and with the word
Each struggling column felt the blow
Which fell unaimed, which struck unheard,
And hurled them to the gulf below.

From out the drifted mass of snow
A youthful drummer feebly crept,
For he unharmed received the blow,
While low in death his comrades slept.

Down deep amid those lifeless forms —
Alas! what power could aid him there? —
And 'mid the thunder-crash of storms
He beat his drum in wild despair.

The muffled sounds went ringing up
That awful precipice of snow,
While o'er despair a gleam of hope
Rose in the throbbing breast below.
Ah, how that desperate, vain appeal,
That touching, pleading, stirring call,
Went piercing like a blade of steel
To hearts whose aid was powerless, all!

And still he beat the hurried roll,
Still upward turned his pleading eye,
For hope yet breathed within his soul,
"They will not leave you here to die."
With eager gaze he scanned the steep,
While fearful anguish rent his soul,
And then more loudly rang the beat
Of that long, earnest, solemn roll.

But soon the rapid strains grew less,
And then, without one pitying eye,
Without one heart to cheer or bless,
The poor boy lay him down to die.
His dying strains more faintly rang,
His wail of hopeless agony,
Then Alpine blasts his death-dirge sang —
He'd beaten his last reveille.

After Three Years.

I AM so happy! so happy!
My heart is as glad as a bird's,
And the cry of its wild, wild joy
I can scarce frame into words;
There's a thrill of glad exultation,
And a gush of thanks unto God,
Who pitied me "like as a father"
When I bowed to the chastening rod,
And gave me my gift from the altar
Without requiring his blood.

I am so happy! so happy!
My heart is half wild with glee;
No more weary days of waiting,
No more nights of weeping for me,
For a manly form is beside me,
My head leans on a manly breast,
And the kiss of my soldier brother
On my quivering lips is pressed.
O God, I thank thee! I thank thee!
Thou hast guided him back to his rest.

I am so happy! so happy!
Brother, dear brother, the years
That have passed since we met are forgotten,
With all their trials and tears,

It seems but yester' morning
That I kissed you "good-by" at the door;
And now in the hush of evening
I welcome you home once more,
Just the same dear brown-cheeked brother
That I loved in the days of yore.

I am so happy! so happy!
Father, I trusted in thee,
And the truth of thy blessed promise
Thou hast sweetly fulfilled to me.
I thank thee, O God, for the trial
That taught me to leave all my care
At the mercy-seat of my Father,
Who helped me those trials to bear;
I thank thee that danger and hardships
Must yield to the power of prayer.

The Two Knapsacks.

WIFE, do you hear the doves cooing out of the glen,
Above the whetting of scythes and the talk of the busy men?
And into the chamber's shadows the afternoon sunshine peers,
Through the curtaining scarlet creepers flinging its golden spears.

So come the thoughts and the dreams of the days that forever are lost,
Cheering my old tired head so bowed with the slow years' frost,
Making less tedious the waiting for the call that not long will part
Us, who from life's spring to its autumn were one in life and heart.

Ruth, look how the rays gild the knapsacks hung by the door!
Loop up the curtains that I may behold them once more;
The one I bore in '12, through sunny weather and storm,
Under the brave old flag whose name makes my heart grow warm.

The other is little Robert's, my curly-haired, blue-eyed pet;
He is a man now, did you say? ah, yes, but I often forget;
When last at home I know he was tanned, bearded, and tall—
Hark! is that not the echo of his free step in the hall?

Ah, how well I remember when he sat on my knee in the noon,
And answered the merry birds, piping through the sweet air of June
From the trees that were ruddy with cherries, and at dusk mocked the low of the kine
As they came up the dewy lane, crushing out odors of thyme.

And earlier than that, I steadied his feet when he learned to walk alone;
It seems scarce a week and a day since then, and you say my Rob is grown,
And 'listed under the flag — God bless him! Ruth, can it be a tear
That moistens these dim old eyes, unwet for many and many a year?

My brain is a little dazed sometimes, and I dream this war is the same
That I bore yon old knapsack in, and it set my cold blood aflame
When they fired on the Stripes and Stars; so, hearing the drum and fife,
I sprang up without my crutch, as though yet in the heyday of life.

Wife, do you mind how the music floated adown the street,
And you stood under the old, gnarled tree, so brave, yet so girlish and sweet,
When, with my rifle over my shoulder, I came to say good-by,
And you trembled like a reed in the wind, but never uttered a cry?

I carried the picture in my heart for many and many a day,
That little, lithe figure under the leaves through which a sunbeam astray
Fell on your soft brown hair till its waves were like burnished gold,
And I took a white rose that fluttered softly down from your bodice fold.

It is in the old knapsack yet, my wife, but, like me, has past its prime.
And a drop of blood is on it, for 'twas close to my heart at the time
I was wounded at Chippewa; give it here and let me show
How I want it placed above my heart when its pulses are beating slow;

And let them leave it there when I'm dead; I would like to see Rob before —
But never mind, we will meet again some day on the better shore.
Why don't you speak to me Ruth? the dusk is beginning to fall,
And listen! yes, good-night, I must answer the Master's call.

When lights were brought and the grandchildren came trooping into the room,
With musical talk and laughter breaking the pleasant gloom,
The old man had answered the call he heard through the summer twilight air,
And his wife, with a smile on her withered lips, lay dead in her great arm-chair.

They found the stained rose in his tight-clasped hands, and when they laid them to rest
Side by side in the quiet church-yard, they left it upon his breast.
The starry blue garlands of myrtle are trailing above them this spring.
And the robins among the blossoms softly their requiems sing.

Wiggins on the Times.

OLD Joshua Wiggins was talking last night
Of things which are wrong, and which must be set right,
And he said, that with half of an organ of sight
It was easy to see the propriety
Of making a thorough, complete reformation,
A wonderful, absolute regeneration,
A change which should strike to the heart of the nation,
And alter the tone of society.

He said that the land was infested by thieves,
By men who were swayed like the dead autumn leaves,
By dreamers rehearsing the vision of sheaves,
By Jacobs, still asking the question,
Shall I and thy brethren bow down unto thee?
Shalt thou be the ruler, thy bond-servants we?
For making obeisance, 'tis easy to see,
In a land where all claim to be equal and free,
Is rather a startling suggestion.

He said that the value of silver and gold
Had risen so high that the worth was untold,
But that friendship, and virtue, and manhood were sold
For a price that was scarcely worth mention;
That while precious metals a premium gained,
More precious devotion and honor unstained,
All over the land at a discount remained,
And still they were on the declension.

Now it will not surprise you that Joshua's tone
So loud, and excited, and angry had grown,
While he the sad state of the country had shown
That little and big gathered round him;
For if one of our speakers, in populous towns,
Should test the enjoyment of rustics and clowns,
At the linking of verbs, prepositions, and nouns,
It would awe if it did not confound him.

Ever since the light footsteps of Eden's fair queen
Pressed the rich velvet turf and the blossoms between,
As she passed to the tree that stood fragrant and green,
With its fruitage of good and of evil,
When we hear a man talking by day or by night,
Be the theme of his prophecy weighty or light,
We thirst for a knowledge of wrong and of right,
Like Eve in the garden primeval.

Mr. Wiggins, encouraged by murmured applause,
Went on to explain how the national laws
Might act as a pressure to lower the cause,
Instead as a lever to raise it;
How discord and violence, hatred and crime,
Might weaken a land in the strength of its prime,
Might darken the light of its glory sublime,
And make it an insult to praise it.

But something was wanting in Joshua's speech,
While he earnestly sought these grand lessons to teach,
It puzzled the few whom his warning could reach,
Though they felt it a sin to neglect it;

For while he thus talked of this grand reformation,
This wonderful, absolute regeneration,
This change that should strike to the heart of the nation,
He forgot to say who should effect it!

Incident of the French Camp.

YOU know we French stormed Ratisbon,
A mile or so away,
On a little mound, Napoleon
Stood on our storming-day;
With neck out-thrust, you fancy how,
Legs wide, arms locked behind,
As if to balance the prone brow,
Oppressive with its mind.

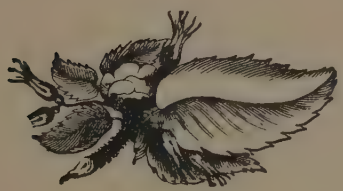
Just as perhaps he mused, "My plans
That soar, to earth may fall,
Let once my army-leader Lannes
Waver at yonder wall,"—
Out 'twixt the battery-smokes there flew
A rider, bound on bound
Full-galloping; nor bridle drew
Until he reached the mound.

Then off there flung in smiling joy,
And held himself erect
By just his horse's mane, a boy;
You hardly could suspect,

(So tight he kept his lips compressed,
Scarce any blood came through),
You looked twice ere you saw his breast
Was all but shot in two.

"Well," cried he, "Emperor, by God's grace
We've got you Ratisbon!
The marshal's in the market-place,
And you'll be there anon
To see your flag-bird flap his vans
Where I, to heart's desire,
Perched him!" The chief's eye flashed; his plans
Soared up again like fire.

The chief's eye flashed; but presently
Softened itself, as sheathes
A film the mother-eagle's eye
When her bruised eaglet breathes:
"You're wounded!" "Nay," his soldier's pride
Touched to the quick, he said:
"I'm killed, sire!" And, his chief beside
Smiling, the boy fell dead.



Dot Maid mit Hazel Hair.

DALK not to me 'boud maidens rare,
Mit shkin of bearly hue—
Dere vasn'd any kin combare
Mit von I hafe in view.

She's gendle like der sofd gayzelle
Her face vas awful fair—
She has dwo aupurn eyes of plue
Und hazel vas her hair.

Her woice vas rich like anyding,
Her moud vas like der rose,
Her sheeks — dem plooms just like a beach
Und dimpled vas her nose.

Her hands und feed vas shmall und need,
Und von dot maiden sings,
Dem leedle birds dey glose deir eyes,
Und flob deir leedle vings.

I'm going to dook dot leedle maid
Some day to been my vife,
Und made her habby like I kin,
Der balance of her life.

Und ven ve'm seddled down for goot,
I'll show you someding rare,—
Dwo shmiling aupurn eyes of plue,
Und shblended hazel hair.

The Yarn of the "Nancy Bell."

'TWAS on the shores that round our coast
From Deal to Ramsgate span,
That I found alone on a piece of stone,
An elderly naval man.

His hair was weedy, his beard was long,
And weedy and long was he,
And I heard this wight on the shore recite,
In a singular minor key:—

"Oh, I am a cook and a captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig."

And he shook his fists and he tore his hair,
Till I really felt afraid;
For I couldn't help thinking the man had been drinking,
And so I simply said:—

"O elderly man, it's little I know
Of the duties of men of the sea,
And I'll eat my hand if I understand
How you can possibly be

"At once a cook, and a captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And a bo'sun tight and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig."

Then he gave a hitch to his trousers, which
Is a trick all seamen larn,
And having got rid of a thumping quid,
He spun this painful yarn:—

"'Twas in the good ship *Nancy Bell*
That we sailed to the Indian Sea,
And there on a reef we come to grief,
Which has often occurred to me.

"And pretty nigh all o' the crew was drowned
(There was seventy-seven o' soul),
And only ten o' the *Nancy's* men
Said 'Here!' to the muster-roll.

"There was me and the cook and the captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And the bo'sun tight and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig.

"For a month we'd neither wittles nor drink,
Till a-hungry we did feel,
So, we drawed a lot, and, accordin', shot
The captain for our meal.

"The next lot fell to the *Nancy's* mate,
And a delicate dish he made;
Then our appetite with the midshipmite
We seven survivors stayed.

"And then we murdered the bo'sun tight,
And he much resembled pig;

Then we wittled free, did the cook and me,
On the crew of the captain's gig.

"Then only the cook and me was left,
And the delicate question 'Which
Of us two goes to the kettle?' arose,
And we argued it out as sich.

"For I loved that cook as a brother, I did,
And the cook he worshiped me;
But we'd both be blowed if we'd either be stowed
In the other chap's hold, you see.

"'I'll be eat if you dines off me,' says Tom,
'Yes, that,' says I, 'you'll be';
'I'm boiled if I die, my friend,' quoth I,
And 'Exactly so,' quoth he.

"Says he, 'Dear James, to murder me
Were a foolish thing to do,
For don't you see that you can't cook *me*,
While I can — and will — cook *you!*'

"So, he boils the water, and takes the salt
And the pepper in portions true
(Which he never forgot), and some chopped shalot,
And some sage and parsley too.

"'Come here,' says he, with a proper pride,
Which his smiling features tell,
'Twill soothing be if I let you see
How extremely nice you'll smell!'

"And he stirred it round and round and round,
And he sniffed at the foaming froth;
When I ups with his heels, and smothers his squeals
In the scum of the boiling broth.

"And I eat that cook in a week or less,
And — as I eating be
The last of his chops, why I almost drops,
For a wessel in sight I see.

"And I never larf, and I never smile,
And I never lark nor play,
But I sit and croak, and a single joke
I have — which is to say:—

"Oh, I am a cook and a captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig!"

Uncle Mellick Dines With His Master.

L' marster is a cur'us man, as sho as yo' is born!
I's wukkin' in de crib one day a-shellin' o' some corn,
An' he was standin' at de do';—I "knowed it"? no, sah, not!
Or, fo' de king! dese jaws uv mine, I'd sh'ly kept 'em shot.
But to Bru. Simon, shellin' too, what should I do but say:
"I's starvin' sence I lars has eat — a week ago to-day."
Den marster cussed and hollered: "Here's a shame an' a dus-grace!
I, so long a planter, — a starved nigger on my place!
Come, Mellick, drap dat corn an' walk straight to de house wid me;
A starvin' nigger on my place's a thing shall nebber be."

"Hi! *me* eat 'long de white folks, sah?" "Yes, Mellick, take a seat."
Den to missis: "Dis starved nigger I'se done fotch to make 'im eat,"—
An' he drawed a big revolvah an' he drapped it by he plate, —
"Gub 'im soup! an' twixt de swallers, don' lemme see yo' wait."
Dat soup was fine, I tell yo', an' I hide it mighty soon;—
One eye sot on de pistol an' de turrer on de spoon.
"Fish for Mellick, in a hurry, he's a starvin', don't yo' see?"
(Dem mizable house-niggers tucked dar heads an' larfed at me.)
An' I went for dat red-snapper like de big fish for de small;—
Glarnced at de navy-shooter onct, den swallered bones an' all.

"Gub 'im tucky, ham an' aigs, rice, taters, spinach, sparrergrars,
Bread, hom'ny, mutton, chicken, beef, corn, turnips, apple-sars,
Peas, cabbage, aig-plant, artichoke" — (Dat pistol still in view,
An' de white folks dey all larfin', an' dem silly niggers, too) —
"Termaters, carrots, pahsnips, beets" — ("When *is* he gwine git done?")—
"Squash, punkin', beans an' kercumbers,— eat, Mellick, don't leabe none;
For dis here day's done brung to me a shame an' a dusgrace;—
I, so long a planter, — a starved nigger on my place!"

Dem things ef I'd be'n by myself, I'd soon put out o' sight;
But de com'cal sitiwation dar, it spile my appetite;
I had to wrastle wid dem wittles hard enough dat day!
Till "Now champagne for Mellick!" I heard ole marster say.
When dat nigger shoot de bottle by my hade — I's sho'ly skeered;
Dat stuff it look so b'ilin' hot, to drink it I wuz feared;
But arter I'd done swallered down a glars, I feel so fine,
I 'gin de sitiwation not so very much to min';—
An' den a little restin' spell I sorter tried to take,
But, Lor'! ole marster hollered: "Gub 'im puddin', pie an' cake! —
—Wid he han' upon de pistol, an' de debbel in he eye!—
"An', Mellick, down wid all! — onless yo' is prepar'd to die."

I hurried home dem goodies like I hudn't eat dat day;
Tell marster see I couldn't pack anoder crumb away;
An' den he say: "Now, Mellick, to de crib, git up an' go!
An' de naix time yo' is starvin' come to me an' lemme know."
But, Lor', in dat ar bizniss I kin nebber show my face;—
An' dar's nebber been anoder starvin' nigger on de place!

Ho-Ho of the Golden Belt.

A BEAUTIFUL maiden was little Min-Ne,
Eldest daughter of wise Wang-Ke;
Her skin had the color of saffron-tea,
And her nose was flat as flat could be;
And never were seen such beautiful eyes,
Two almond kernels in shape and size,
Set in a couple of slanting gashes,
And not in the least disfigured by lashes;
And, then, such feet!
You'd scarcely meet
In the longest walk through the grandest street
(And you might go seeking
From Nanking to Peking),
A pair so remarkably small and neat.

Two little stumps —
Mere pedal lumps —
That toddle along with the funniest thumps,
In China, you know, are reckoned trumps.
It seems a trifle to make such a boast of it!
But how they *will* dress it,
And bandage and press it,
By making the least, to make the most of it!
As you may suppose,
She had plenty of beaux
Bowing around her beautiful toes,
Praising her feet, and eyes and nose;

In rapturous verse and elegant prose.
She had lots of lovers, old and young
There was lofty Long and babbling Lung,
Opulent Tin and eloquent Tung,
Musical Sing and the rest among,
Great Hang-Yu and You-be-Hung.

But though they smiled, and smirked and bowed,
None could please her of all the crowd:
Lung and Tung she thought too loud;
Opulent Tin was much too proud;
Lofty Long was quite too tall;
Musical Sing sung very small;
And most remarkable feat of all,
Of great Hang-Yu the lady made game,
And You-be-Hung she mocked the same,
By echoing back his ugly name.

But the hardest heart is doomed to melt;
Love is a passion that will be felt;
And just when scandal was making free
To hint "what a pretty old maid she'd be,"
Little Min-Ne—
Who but she?—
Married Ho-Ho of the Golden Belt!
A man, I must own, of bad reputation,
And low in purse though high in station,—
A sort of imperial poor relation,
Who ranked as the Emperor's second cousin
Multiplied by a hundred dozen;

And to mark the love the Emperor felt,
Had a pension clear
Of three pounds a year,
And the honor of wearing a Golden Belt!

And gallant Ho-Ho
Could really show
A handsome face, as faces go
In this Flowery Land, where, you must know,
The finest flowers of beauty grow.
He'd the very widest kind of jaws,
And his nails were like an eagle's claws,
And — though it may seem a wondrous tale —
(Truth is mighty and will prevail!)
He'd a *queue* as long as the deepest clause
Under the Emperor's chancery laws.

Yet, how he managed to win Min-Ne
The men declared they couldn't see;
But all the ladies, over their tea,
In this one point were known to agree:
Four gifts were sent to aid his plea:
A smoking-pipe with a golden clog,
A box of tea, and a poodle dog,
And a painted heart that was all aflame,
And bore, in blood, the lover's name.
Ah! how could presents pretty as these
A delicate lady fail to please?
She smoked the pipe with the golden clog,
And drank the tea, and ate the dog,

And kept the heart — and that's the way
The match was made, the gossips say.

I can't describe the wedding-day,
Which fell in the lovely month of May;
Nor stop to tell of the honey-moon,
And how it vanished all too soon.
Alas! that I the truth must speak,
And say that in the fourteenth week,
Soon as the wedding guests were gone,
And their wedding suits began to doff,
Min-Ne was weeping and "taking on,"
For *he* had been trying to "take her off."

Six wives, before, he had sent to heaven,
And, being partial to number "seven,"
He wished to add his latest pet;
Just, perhaps, to make up the set!
Mayhap the rascal found a cause
Of discontent in a certain clause
In the Emperor's very liberal laws,
Which gives, when a Golden Belt is wed,
Six hundred pounds to furnish the bed;
And if, in turn, he marry a score,
With every wife six hundred more.

First, he tried to murder Min-Ne
With a special cup of poisoned tea;
But the lady, smelling a mortal foe,
Cried "Ho-Ho!
I'm very fond of mild Souchong,
But you, my love, you make it too strong."

At last Ho-Ho, the treacherous man,
Contrived the most consummate plan
Invented since the world began;
He went and got him a savage dog,
Who'd eat a woman as soon as a frog;
Kept him a day without any prog,
Then shut him up in an iron bin,
Slipped the bolt, and locked him in;
Then giving the key
To poor Min-Ne,
Said, "Love, there's something you *mustn't* see
In the chest beneath the orange tree."

* * * * *

Poor, mangled Min-Ne! with her latest breath
She told her father the cause of her death;
And so it reached the Emperor's ear,
And his Highness said, "It is very clear
Ho-Ho has committed a murder here!"
And he doomed Ho-Ho to end his life
By the terrible dog that killed his wife;
But in mercy (let his praise be sung!)
His thirteen brothers were merely hung,
And his slaves bambooed in the mildest way
For a calendar month, three times a day.
And that's the way that justice dealt
With wicked Ho-Ho of the Golden belt!

Plain Language From Truthful James.

WHICH I wish to remark —
And my language is plain —
That for ways that are dark
And for tricks that are vain,
The heathen Chinee is peculiar:
Which the same I would rise to explain.

Ah Sin was his name;
And I shall not deny
In regard to the same
What that name might imply;
But his smile it was pensive and childlike,
As I frequent remarked to Bill Nye.

It was August the third,
And quite soft was the skies,
Which it might be inferred
That Ah Sin was likewise:
Yet he played it that day upon William
And me in a way I despise.

Which we had a small game,
And Ah Sin took a hand:
It was euchre. The same
He did not understand;
But he smiled, as he sat by the table,
With the smile that was childlike and bland.

Yet the cards they were stocked
In a way that I grieve,
And my feelings were shocked
At the state of Nye's sleeve,
Which was stuffed full of aces and bowers,
And the same with intent to deceive.

But the hands that were played
By that heathen Chinee,
And the points that he made
Were quite frightful to see —
Till at last he put down a right bower,
Which the same Nye had dealt unto me.

Then I looked up at Nye,
And he gazed upon me;
And he rose with a sigh,
And said, "Can this be?
We are ruined by Chinese cheap labor,"—
And he went for that heathen Chinee.

In the scene that ensued
I did not take a hand;
But the floor it was strewed
Like the leaves on the strand
With the cards that Ah Sin had been hiding,
In the game "he did not understand."

In his sleeves, which were long,
He had twenty-four packs —
Which was coming it strong,
Yet I state but the facts;

And we found on his nails, which were taper,
What is frequent in tapers — that's wax.

Which is why I remark,
And my language is plain,
That for ways that are dark
And for tricks that are vain
The heathen Chinee is peculiar —
Which the same I am free to maintain.

Nongtongpaw.

JOHN BULL for pastime took a prance,
Some time ago, to peep at France;
To talk of sciences and arts,
And knowledge gained in foreign parts.
Monsieur, obsequious, heard him speak,
And answered John in heathen Greek;
To all he asked, 'bout all he saw,
'Twas "Monsieur, je vous n'entends pas."

John to the Palais-Royal come,
Its splendor almost struck him dumb.
"I say, whose house is that there here?"
"House! Je vous n'entends pas, Monsieur."
"What! Nongtongpaw again!" cries John;
"This fellow is some mighty Don,
No doubt he's plenty for the maw,
I'll breakfast with this Nongtongpaw."

John saw Versailles from Marly's height,
And cried, astonished at the sight,
"Whose fine estate is that there here?"
"State! Je vous n'entends pas, Monsieur."
"His? What! the land and houses, too?
The fellow's richer than a Jew!
On everything he lays his claw!
I should like to dine with Nongtongpaw."

Next tripping came a courtly fair;
John cried, enchanted with her air,
"What lovely wench is that there here?"
"Ventch! Je vous n'entends pas, Monsieur."
"What! he again? Upon my life!
A palace, lands, and then a wife
Sir Joshua might delight to draw:
I should like to sup with Nongtongpaw."

"But hold! whose funeral's that?" cried John.
"Je vous n'entends pas." "What! is he gone?
Wealth, fame, and beauty could not save
Poor Nongtongpaw then from the grave!
His race is run, his game is up,—
I'd with him breakfast, dine, and sup;
But since he chooses to withdraw,
Good-night t'ye, Monsieur Nongtongpaw."

Captain Dick.

UPON the shores of lofty Lake Tahoe,
Or, rather, in the little hidden bay
Called Emerald, there lived, some years ago,
The sailor, Captain Dick, whose beard was gray,
And grizzled with much washing in the ocean's salty spray.

Long years he sailed upon the stormy sea,
And saw his comrades perish, one by one,
And go to feed the sharks. At last, thought he,
"I'll leave the ocean ere my days are done,
And have some Christian ceremony when my race is run."

Upon the bosom of this quiet bay
He found a little isle of solid rock.
"Here," thought he, "is the place for me to lay
My shivered timbers down, safe from the shock
Of tempests, and of tourists who at sepulchers do mock."

Long time he worked there, long and patiently,
With hammer, chisel, crow-bar, sledge and drill,
And digged himself a grave, six feet by three,
And then pulled over home, took out his will,
And told the world about it in the final codicil.

Above his sepulcher he built a roof,
And nailed a cross upon it for a charm;
Then fancied that his final home was proof

Against the rain, the devil, and all harm;
A very comfortable bunk, and very snug and warm.

His house was now in order, and he found
It rather lonesome here, with naught to do,
But trim his little yacht and cruise around
The island where his grave was in full view;
Which recreation made him feel at times a trifle blue.

So often, on fine days, he would repair
To Rowland's custom-house across the lake
(A gin-mill is a "custom-house" out there),
And there the captain would spin yarns and slake
His thirst with whatsoever drink the boys asked him to take.

Sometimes he took too much, at least he did
On the momentous day which we deplore.
'Twas calculated that he soaked his quid
Some twelve or fourteen times, and then, before
He sailed for home, he filled his jug with half a gallon more.

Oh, fearful are the storms on Lake Tahoe,
And often take the sailor unawares,—
And when the tempest once begins to blow,
He has but little time to say his prayers;
Nor always makes the best of this, but reefs his sail and swears.

Next day they found the sail-boat upside down,
An oar or two were floating there close by.
The only other relic was a brown
Half-gallon jug, a-bobbing high and dry;
Half empty now, but it had been full of pernicious rye.

But Captain Dick, they found him nevermore;
To look for him was hardly worth the while.
When Lake Tahoe's deep water closes o'er
A man, he sinks a quarter of a mile
Before he stops, as has been proved quite frequently by trial.

So, reader, if of this you have a doubt,
Just take a pilgrimage to Emerald Bay,
In whose green nook there stands, with latch-string out,
The summer cottage of Ben Holladay,
Where Sailor Jack will welcome you if Ben should be away.

There you will hear the burden of this rhyme,
And see the captain's picture on the wall,
And see the ship he carved in idle time,
And see the oars they picked up from the squall,
And see the empty grave, which is the surest proof of all.

The Dead Moon.

THE moon is dead — defunct — played out,—
So says a very learned doctor;
She looketh well, beyond a doubt;
Perhaps she's in a trance, dear Proctor.

At any rate, she's most entrancing
For one of such decrepit age;
And on her radiant beauties glancing,
She charms the eyes of youth and sage.

And so the man upon her 's perished!—
He lived in doleful isolation;
Poor wretch! No wife his bosom cherished,
No children squalled his consolation.

Yet she's adored by all the gypsies,
Whose lovers sigh beneath her beams;
She aids the steps of staggering tipsies,
And silvers o'er romantic streams.

And once she caught Endymion sleeping,
And stooped to kiss him in a grove,
Upon him very slyly creeping;
He was her first and early love.

But that's a very ancient story,
And was a youthful indiscretion,
When she was in her primal glory,
Ere scandal-schools had held a session.

Dear, darling moon! I doat upon her
I watch her nightly in the sky;
But oh! upon my word of honor,
I'd rather she were dead than I.

What Mr. Robinson Thinks.

GUVENER B. is a sensible man;
He stays to his home an' looks arter his folks;
He draws his furrer ez strait ez he can,
An' into nobody's tater-patch pokes;—
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez he wunt vote fer Guvener B.

My! aint it terrible? Wut shall we du?
We can't never choose him o' course,—thet's flat;
Guess we shall hev to come round, (don't you?)
An' go in fer thunder an' guns, an' all that;
For John P.
Robinson he
Sez he wunt vote fer Guvener B.

Gineral C. is a dreffle smart man:
He's been on all sides thet give places or pelf,
But consistency still was a part of his plan,—
He's been true to *one* party,—an' thet is himself;—
So John P.
Robinson he
Sez he shall vote fer Gineral C.

Gineral C., he goes in fer the war;
He don't vally principle more'n an old cud;
Wut did God make us raytional creeturs fer,
But glory an' gunpowder, plunder an, blood?
So John P.
Robinson he
Sez he shall vote fer Gineral C.

We were gittin' on nicely up here to our village,
With good old idees o' wut's right an' wut aint,
We kind o' thought Christ went agin war an' pillage,
An' that eppyletts worn't the best mark of a saint;
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez this kind o' thing's an exploded idee.

The side of your country must ollers be took,
An' Presidunt Polk, you know, *he* is our country;
An' the angel that writes all our sins in a book
Puts the *debit* to him, an' to us the *per contry;*
An' John P.
Robinson he
Sez this is his view o' the thing to a T.

Parson Wilbur he calls all these argimunts lies;
Sez they're nothin' on airth but jest *fee, faw, fum;*
An' thet all this big talk of our destinies
Is half ov it ign'ance, an' t'other half rum;
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez it aint no sech thing; an', of course, so must we.

Parson Wilbur sez *he* never heerd in his life
Thet th' Apostles rigged out in their swaller-tail coats,
An' marched round in front of a drum an' a fife,
To git some on 'em office, an' some on 'em votes;
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez they didn't know everythin' down in Judee.

Wal, it's a marcy we've gut folks to tell us.
The rights an' the wrongs o' these matters, I vow,—
God sends country lawyers, an' other wise fellers,
To drive the world's team wen it gits in a slough;
Fer John P.
Robinson he
Sez the world'll go right, ef he hollers out Gee!

That Grumbling Old Woman.

THERE was an old woman, and — what do you think?—
She lived upon nothing but victuals and drink!
But though victuals and drink were the chief of her diet,
Yet this grumbling old woman never was quiet.

MOTHER GOOSE.

She had a nice cottage, a hen-house and barn,
And a sheep whose fine wool furnished blankets and yarn;
A cow that supplied her with butter and cheese,
A large flock of geese, and a hive full of bees.

Yet she grumbled and grumbled from morning till night,
For this foolish old woman thought nothing went right;
E'en the days of the week were all wrong; for on Sunday
She always declared that she wished it was Monday.

If cloudless and fair was the long summer day,
And the sun smiled down on the new-mown hay,
"There's a drouth," she said, "as sure as you're born!
If it don't rain soon, it will ruin the corn!"

But when descended the gentle rain,
Blessing the bountiful fields of grain,
And bringing new life to flower and bud,
She said there was coming a second flood.

She never gave aught to the needy and poor;
The outcast and hungry she turned from her door.

"Shall I work," she said, with a wag of the head,
"To provide for the idle and lazy their bread?"

But the rich she regarded with envy and spite;
She said 'twas a shame,—'twasn't decent nor right,—
That the haughty old squire, with his bow-legged son,
Should ride with two horses, while she rode with one.

And the crabbed old fellow,— to spite her, no doubt,—
Had built a new barn like a palace throughout,
With a cupola on it, as grand as you please,
And a rooster that whirled head and tail with the breeze.

"I wish, so I do," she said, cocking her eye,
"There'd come a great whirlwind, and blow it sky-high!"
And e'en as she spoke, a loud rushing was heard,
And the barn to its very foundations was stirred.

It stood the shock bravely, but — pitiful sight! —
The wind took the old woman up like a kite!
As she sailed up aloft over forest and hill,
Her tongue, so they say, it kept wagging on still.

And where she alighted, no mortal doth know;
Or whether she ever alighted below.

MORAL.

My moral, my dears, you will find if you try;
And if you don't find any, neither can I.

De 'Sperience of de Reb'rend Quacko Strong.

SWING dat gate wide, 'Postle Peter,
Ring de big bell, beat the gong,
Saints and martyrs den will meet dar
Brudder, Reb'rend Quacko Strong.

Sound dat bugle, Angel Gabr'el!
Tell de elders loud an' long,
Cl'ar out dem high seats ob heaben,
Here comes Reb'rend Quacko Strong!

Turn the guard out, Gen'ral Michael,
Arms present, de line along,
Let the band play "Conk'rin Hero"
For de Reb'rend Quacko Strong.

Den bid Moses bring de crown, an'
Palms, an' weddin' gown along!
Wid processions to de landin',
Here's de Reb'rend Quacko Strong.

Joseph, march down wid your bred'ren,
Tribes, an' banners musterin' strong;
Speech of welcome from ole Abram,
Answer, Reb'rend Quacko Strong.

Tune your harp-strings tight, King David,
Sing your good Ole Hundred song,
Let de seraphs dance wid cymbals
'Round de Reb'rend Quacko Strong.

Angels hear me yell Hosanner
Hear my dulcem speritool song;
Halleluyer! I'm a comin',
I'm de Reb'rend Quacko Strong.

Make that white robe radder spacious,
And the waist belt strordn'ry long,
'Cause 'twill take some room in glory
For de Reb'rend Quacko Strong.

What! No one at the landin'!
'Pears like suff'n' 'nudder's wrong;
Guess I'll gib dat sleepy Peter
Fits—from Reb'rend Quacko Strong.

What a narrar little gateway!
My! dat gate am hard to move,
'Who am dat?" says 'Postle Peter
From the parapet above.

Uncle Peter, don't you know me—
Me a shinin' light so long?
Why de berry niggers call me
Good ole Reb'rend Quacko Strong.

Dun'no me, why! I've convarted
Hundreds o' darkies in a song,
Dun'no me! nor yet my massa!
I'm de Reb'rend Quacko Strong!

Ole Nick's comin'! I can feel it
Gettin' warmer all about.

Oh, my good, kind Kernel Peter,
Let me in, I'm all too stout

To go 'long wid Major Satan
Into dat warm climate 'mong
Fire an' brimstone. Hear me knockin',
Ole church member, Quacko Strong.

Dat loud noise am comin' nearer,
Dreffle smell like powder smoke;
'Nudder screech! Good heaben help me—
Lord, forgib dis poor ole moke.

Allers was so berry holy,
Singin' and prayin' extra long;
Now the debble's gwine to catch me,
Poor ole nigger, Quacko Strong.

Hi! dat gate swings back a little,
Mighty squeezin' to get froo!
Ole Apollyon howlin' louder,
Everything around am blue.

Bang de gate goes! an' Beelzebub;
Bunch ob wool upon his prong,
Goes along widout the soul ob
Missabul sinner, name ob Strong.

In a Paris Restaurant.

I GAZE, while thrills my heart with patriot pride,
Upon the exquisite skin, rose-flushed and creamy;
The perfect little head; on either side
Blonde waves. The dark eyes, vaguely soft, and dreamy,
Hold for a space my judgment in eclipse,
Until, with half a pout, supremely dainty,
"*He's reel mean*" — slip from out the strawberry lips —
"Oh, ain't he!"

This at her consort, — youthful, black-moustached,
And diamond-studded, — this reproof, whereat he
Is not to any great extent abashed.
(That youth's from "Noo Orleens" or "Cincinnatty,"
I'm sure.) But she, — those dark eyes doubtful, strike
Her sherbet ice. . . Won't touch it. . . Is induced to.
Result: "I'd sooner eat Mince Pie, Jim, *like*
We used to."

While then my too soon smitten soul recants,
I hear her friend discoursing with much feeling
Of tailors, and a garment he calls "pants."
I note into her eyes a softness stealing —
A shade of thought upon her low, sweet brow —
She hears him not — I swear I could have cried here;
The escort nudges her — she starts, and — "How?
The *i*dear!"

This was the finishing and final touch.
I rose and took no further observation.
I love my country "just about" as much —
I have for it as high a veneration —
As a man whose father fought for liberty,
Whose veins conduct the blood of Commodore Perry can,
But she was quite too very awfully
American.

Uncle Ned's Defense.

MY breddren and sisters, I rises for to splain
Dis matter what ye's talkin' 'bout; I hopes to make it plain.
I'm berry sorry dat de ting hab come before de church,
For when I splains it you will see dat it am nuffin' much.

My friends, your humble speakah, while trabblin' heah below,
Has nebber stopped to hoard up gold and silber for to show,
He's only stoppin' heah a spell; we all hab got to die,
And so I always tried to lay my treasure up on high.

Da's just one ting dat pesters me, and dat am dis, you see,
De rabens fed old Lijah, but de creturs won't feed me;
Da's got above dar business, and just go swoopin' 'round,
And nebber stop to look at me, awaitin' on de ground.

I waited mighty sartin like, my faith was powerful strong,
I reckoned dat dem pesky birds would surely come along;
But oh, my friendly hearers, my faith hes kotched a fall,
Dem aggravatin' fowls went by and never stopped at all.

De meal and flour was almost gone, de pork barrel gettin' low,
And so one day I 'cluded dat I had better go
To brudder Johnson's tater patch to borrer just a few.
'Twas evening 'fore I got a start — I had so much to do.

It happened dat de night was dark, but dat I didn't mind,
I knowed de way to dat dah patch — 'twas easy nuff to find,
And den I didn't care to meet dat Johnson, for I knowed
Dat he would sass me 'bout de mess ob taters dat I owed.

I got de basket full at last, and tuck it on my back,
And den was goin' to tote it home, when somethin' went kerwhack.
I tot it was a cannon; but it just turned out to be
Dat Johnson's one-hoss pistol a-pointin' straight at me.

I tried to argufy wid him, I pologized a heap,
But he said dat stealin' taters was as mean as stealin' sheep;
Ob course I could not take dat dar, it had an ugly sound,
So de only ting for me to do was just to knock him down.

And now, my friendly hearers, de story all am told,
Ob course I pounded Johnson till he yelled for me to hold;
An' now I hopes you grees wid me, dat dis yer case and such
Am berry triflin' matters to fotch before de church.

The Lightning-rod Dispenser.

IF the weary world is willing, I've a little word to say
Of a lightning-rod dispenser that dropped down on me one day,
With a poem in his motions, with a sermon in his mien,
With hands as white as lilies, and a face uncommon clean.
No wrinkle had his vestments, and his linen glistened white,
And his new-constructed necktie was an interesting sight;
Which I almost wish his razor had made red that white-skinned throat,
And the new-constructed necktie had composed a hangman's knot,
Ere he brought his sleek-trimmed carcass for my woman folks to see,
And his rip-saw tongue a buzzin' for to gouge a gash in me.

But I couldn't help but like him — as I always think I must,
The gold of my own doctrines in a fellow-heap of dust;
When I fired my own opinions at this person, round by round,
They drew an answering volley, of a very similar sound;
I touched him on religion, and the hopes my heart had known;
He said he'd had experiences quite similar of his own.
I told him of the doubtin's that made dark my early years;
He had laid awake till morning with that same old breed of fears.
I told him of the rough path I hoped to heaven to go;
He was on that very ladder, only just a round below.

I told him of my visions of the sinfulness of gain;
He had seen the self-same picters, though not quite so clear and plain.
Our politics was different, and at first he galled and winced;
But I arg'ed him so able he was very soon convinced.

And 'twas getting toward the middle of a hungry summer day;
There was dinner on the table, and I asked him would he stay?
And he sat down among us, everlasting trim and neat,
And asked a short, crisp blessing, almost good enough to eat;
Then he fired up on the mercies of our Great Eternal Friend,
And gave the Lord Almighty a good, first-class recommend;
And for full an hour we listened to the sugar-coated scamp,
Talking like a blessed angel — eating like a — blasted tramp.

My wife, she liked the stranger, smiling on him warm and sweet
(It always flatters women when their guests are on the eat),
And he hinted that some ladies never lose their early charms,
And kissed her latest baby, and received it in his arms.
My sons and daughters liked him, for he had progressive views,
And chewed the quid of fancy, and gave down the latest news;
And couldn't help but like him, as I fear I always must,
The gold of my own doctrines in a fellow-heap of dust.

He was spreading desolation through a piece of apple pie,
When he paused, and looked upon us with a tear in his off-eye,
And said, "O, happy family! your blessings make me sad;
You call to mind the dear ones that in happier days I had:
A wife as sweet as this one; a babe as bright and fair;
A little girl with ringlets, like that one over there.

I worshiped them too blindly!—my eyes with love were dim!
God took them to his own heart, and now I worship him.
But had I not neglected the means within my way,
Then they might still be living, and loving me to-day.

"One night there came a tempest, the thunder-peals were dire;
The clouds that tramped above us were shooting bolts of fire;
In my own house, I, lying, was thinking, to my blame,
How little I had guarded against those shafts of flame,
When, crash!—through roof and ceiling the deadly lightning cleft,
And killed my wife and children, and only I was left.

"Since that dread time I've wandered, and naught for life have cared,
Save to save others' loved ones, whose lives have yet been spared;
Since then it is my mission, where'er by sorrow tossed,
To sell to virtuous people good lightning-rods—at cost.
With sure and strong protection I'll clothe your buildings o'er,
'Twill cost you fifty dollars (perhaps a trifle more);
What little else it comes to at lowest price I'll put
(You signing this agreement to pay so much per foot)."

I signed it, while my family all approving stood about,
And dropped a tear upon it—(but it didn't blot it out)!
That very day with wagons came some men, both great and small,
They climbed upon my buildings just as if they owned 'em all;
They hacked 'em, and they hewed 'em, much against my loud desires;
They trimmed 'em up with gewgaws, and they bound 'em down with wires;

They trimmed 'em and they wired 'em, and they trimmed an' wired
'em still,
And every precious minute kept a-running up the bill.

My soft-spoke guest a-seeking, did I rave and rush and run;
He was supping with a neighbor, just a three-mile further on.
"Do you think," I fiercely shouted, "that I want a mile of wire
To save each separate hay-cock out o' heaven's consumin' fire?
Do you think to keep my buildin's safe from some uncertain
harm,
I'm goin' to deed you over all the balance of my farm?"

He looked up quite astonished, with a face devoid of guile,
And he pointed to the contract with a reassuring smile:
It was the first occasion that he disagreed with me;
But he held me to that paper with a firmness sad to see;
And for that thunder story, ere the rascal finally went,
I paid two hundred dollars, if I paid a single cent.
And if any lightnin'-rodder wants a dinner-dialogue
With the restaurant department of an enterprising dog,
Let him set his mill a-runnin' just inside my outside gate,
And I'll bet two hundred dollars that he won't have long to wait.

Ingersoll to His Gr-r-r-r-eat Grandmother.

O VENERABLE mammal, see thy happy son,
Victor e'n now, life's journey but half run.
Dost thou not hover with prehensile clinging
On some convenient limb above my pathway swinging,
And glory that thy faith, my grand prothonotary,
Thy child is holding still, without a wish to vary?
Instinctively I squddle in thy morass stygian,
And hang on by the tail to thy lock-jawed religion.
Oft doth thy larnyx cheer my dutiful tympanum
On protoplasmic genesis and reasonless organum;
But yet I feel the loss of elongated caudal,
And sometimes fear to stir across the vast and oozy muddle,
Without thy hand maternal to lift me o'er the bogs,
And thy maturer bellow to scare away the fogs,
And reinspire my liver while I secrete the wonder,
Petitio principii, and knock the church to thunder.
Dear Grandma, let thy bowels, with peristaltic yearning,
Indulge a lovely colic in honor of my learning,
And make me brave to say the stale old saws so cutely
That every ass shall bray in sympathy astutely.
By some sporadic throe I missed the olden shape,
And grew a hairless, tailless, extratypal ape;
But never fear that I shall turn a Christian flunkey—
Religiously I'm true to thee as any other monkey,
As mooney in my pet materialistic bungles
As any of my cousin apes disporting in the jungles.

Dear Grandma, think with pride (now that is just a "figger,"
For *dust* of course *can't* think, whether of ape or nigger,
Or Huxley the big heap, or Ingersoll the bigger;
But, just to keep the run of common ways of writing,
I 'postrophize the old thing's hair and bones in my inditing)—
Dear Grandma, think with pride, that, while in art and sciences
We've got right smart ahead of thy old-time reliances,—
We plow the seas with ships, and disembowel mountains,
And lay the iron rail, and cast the brazen fountains,
And pile up marble cities, and gang-plow all our prairies,
And eat with knives and forks, with cheese from our own dairies,
And hitch the steam to wheels, and paint with sunbeam brushes,
And make the lightning write our bills till all creation rushes,
And print such lots of books, and do such lots of "thinking,"
And have such artificial ways of eating and of drinking,
Of riding and of walking, of waking and of sleeping,
Of dressing up our heads and feet, of spending and of keeping,
Of owning honest acres, of sowing and of reaping,
Of playing on four fiddle-strings, of laughing and of weeping,
Of running banks and big hotels, of fencing and surveying—
Yet, true to our ancestral ilk, we make no head at praying;
We keep the old marsupial stride, the rodent's rare religion,
And worship like a hedgehog still, and reason like a pigeon.
Bless your old heart, my Simian ma (that "heart's" another
"figger"),
The joy of this triumphal hour will make you fairly snigger.
And all *my* children, down the line, I mean shall keep a-saying
The half a score of patent jibes with consentaneous braying,
"*No government*" did royal work for me, *familia mater*—
It turned me t'other end before to run by wind or water;

And I shall leave the ancient plan to my descendants darling,
Assured that every great-great-grand will be an ape or starling;
And when this broad and manly bust has shot its final blizzard,
They'll write above me: "Dust to dust wan't spoken of the gizzard."

[The author begs to suggest the following epitaph as suitable to the occasion contemplated in the last two lines above.]

Here lies the self-applauded brave,
The biggest of the bigots;
Borne empty to his empty grave,
Drained dry by his own spigots.
He lies (as while he lived he lied)
Before the walls of Zion,
Kicked by his own old gun, he died
Without a hope to die on.
His double-ender would not steer
The boiler, thin and rusty,
Collapsed, and killed the engineer,
And so his hopes were "busted."
The Devil lost a brilliant dupe
When Bob missed stays and petered,
And sadly mourns his sprightly supe
In dirges many-metered.
Plenty remain with animus
As evil and conceited,
But none can make so big a fuss
With old Tom Paine repeated.
He threw about the rotten bones
With most ferocious clatter,

And swapped the fullness of his tones
For emptiness of matter.
Bob meant to give the world a shock,
But, blinded with contumacy,
He ran his head against THE ROCK!
Sic req'escat in pace.

The Vagabonds.

WE are two travelers, Roger and I.
Roger's my dog;—come here you scamp!
Jump for the gentlemen,—mind your eye!
Over the table,—look out for the lamp!—
The rogue is growing a little old;
Five years we've tramped through wind and weather,
And slept out-doors when nights were cold,
And ate and drank—and starved together.

We've learned what comfort is, I tell you!
A bed on the floor, a bit of rosin,
A fire to thaw our thumbs (poor fellow!
The paw he holds up there's been frozen),
Plenty of catgut for my fiddle,
(This out-door business is bad for strings),
Then a few nice buckwheats hot from the griddle,
An Roger an I set up for kings!

No, thank ye, sir,—I never drink;
Roger and I are exceedingly moral,—
Aren't we, Roger?—see him wink!
Well, something hot, then,—we won't quarrel.

He's thirsty, too,—see him nod his head?
What a pity, sir, that dogs can't talk!
He understands every word that's said,—
And he knows good milk from water-and-chalk.

The truth is, sir, now I reflect,
I've been so sadly given to grog,
I wonder I've not lost the respect
(Here's to you, sir!) even of my dog.
But he sticks by through thick and thin;
And this old coat, with its empty pockets,
And rags that smell of tobacco and gin,
He'll follow while he has eyes in his sockets.

There isn't another creature living
Would do it, and prove, through every disaster,
So fond, so faithful, and so forgiving,
To such a miserable, thankless master!
No, sir!—see him wag his tail and grin!
By George! it makes my old eyes water!
That is, there's something in this gin
That chokes a fellow. But no matter!

We'll have some music, if you're willing,
And Roger (hem! what a plague a cough is, sir!)
Shall march a little.—Start, you villain!
Stand straight! 'Bout face! Salute your officer!
Put up that paw! Dress! Take your rifle!
(Some dogs have arms, you see!) Now hold your
Cap while the gentlemen give a trifle,
To aid a poor old patriot soldier!

March! Halt! Now show how the rebel shakes
When he stands up to hear his sentence.
Now tell us how many drams it takes
To honor a jolly new acquaintance.
Five yelps,—that's five; he's mighty knowing!
The night's before us, fill the glasses!—
Quick, sir! I'm ill,—my brain is going!
Some brandy,—thank you,—there!—it passes!

Why not reform? That's easily said;
But I've gone through such wretched treatment,
Sometimes forgetting the taste of bread,
And scarce remembering what meat meant,
That my poor stomach's past reform;
And there are times when, mad with thinking,
I'd sell out heaven for something warm
To prop a horrible inward sinking.

Is there a way to forget to think?
At your age, sir, home, fortune, friends,
A dear girl's love,—but I took to drink;
The same old story; you know how it ends.
If you could have seen these classic features,—
You needn't laugh, sir; they were not then
Such a burning libel on God's creatures;
I was one of your handsome men!

If you had seen her, so fair and young,
Whose head was happy on this breast!
If you could have heard the songs I sung
When the wine went round, you wouldn't have guessed

That ever I, sir, should be straying
From door to door, with fiddle and dog,
Ragged and penniless, and playing
To you to-night for a glass of grog!

She's married since,—a parson's wife:
'Twas better for her that we should part,—
Better the soberest, prosiest life
Than a blasted home and a broken heart.
I have seen her? Once: I was weak and spent
On the dusty road, a carriage stopped:
But little she dreamed, as on she went,
Who kissed the coin that her fingers dropped!

You've set me talking, sir; I'm sorry;
It makes me wild to think of the change!
What do you care for a beggar's story?
Is it amusing? you find it strange?
I had a mother so proud of me!
'Twas well she died before— Do you know
If the happy spirits in heaven can see
The ruin and wretchedness here below?

Another glass, and strong, to deaden
This pain; then Roger and I will start.
I wonder, has he such a lumpish, leaden,
Aching thing, in place of a heart?
He is sad sometimes, and would weep, if he could,
No doubt, remembering things that were,—
A virtuous kennel, with plenty of food,
And himself a sober, respectable cur.

I'm better now; that glass was warming.
You rascal! limber your lazy feet!
We must be fiddling and performing
For supper and bed, or starve in the street.
Not a very gay life to lead, you think?
But soon we shall go where lodgings are free,
And the sleepers need neither victuals nor drink;—
The sooner the better for Roger and me!

The Fourth of July.

PATHRICK an' Bridget, just shtep till the door;
Faith! seed ye ever the loike soight before?
Flags all a-flyin' from windy an' roof,
Horses decked wid 'em from forelock to hoof;
All the small childer a-poppin' off cracks—
Troth, but they sound loike shillelahs' bould whacks!
Shpake up, swate Biddy, an' answer me, Pat;
Seed yez in Kerry the loike of all that?
"Phat is the row?" to a shpalpeen, sez I,
"Dade, thin," sez he, "its the Foorth uv July!"

Thin I drawed in from the windy me head,
Not wan word wiser for all that he said;
Long kem a leddy, so shmoilin' an' gay,
Troth, I shpakes oop till hersilf wid me say:
"Plaze, mem," I axed her, "what manes the parade?
Whoy is the racket an' blatherin' made?

Who's been a foightin', an' what was the row?
Shtop a bit, leddy, an' tell me thrue, now."
Faith she looks oop, wid the shmoile in her eye,
"*They're sillybratin' the Foorth uv July!*"

What a gossoon wuz this Foorth uv July!
Who was the cratur, an' whin did he die?
Whist! Biddy, darlint, an' hear the band play!
See the lads steppin' so frisky an' gay!
Bould sojer laddies in all their galore,
Troth, but there's music an' dhrums to the fore!
Flags all a-flyin' an' powdher ablaze —
Thrue for yez, Biddy, these folk have quare ways.
Sure, thin, St. Pathrick was betther, sez I,
A *dale* betther mon, nur the Foorth uv July.

The Courtin'.

GOD makes sech nights, all white an' still
Fur'z you can look or listen,
Moonshine an' snow on field an' hill,
All silence an' all glisten.

Zekle crep' up quite unbeknown,
An' peeked in thru' the winder,
An' there sot Huldy all alone,
'Ith no one nigh to hender.

A fireplace filled the room's one side
With half a cord o' wood in,—
There warn't no stoves (tell comfort died)
To bake ye to a puddin'.

The wa'nut logs shot sparkles out
Towards the pootiest, bless her!
An' leetle flames danced all about
The chiny on the dresser.

Agin the chimbley crook-necks hung,
An' in amongst 'em rusted
The ole queen's arm thet Gran'ther Young
Fetched back from Concord busted.

The very room, coz she was in,
Seemed warm from floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full ez rosy agin
Ez the apples she was peelin'.

'Twas kin' o' kingdom-come to look
On sech a blessèd cre'tur',
A dogrose blushin' to a brook
Ain't modester nor sweeter.

He was six foot o' man, A 1,
Clean grit an' human natur';
None couldn't quicker pitch a ton
Nor dror a furrer straighter.

He'd sparked it with full twenty gals,
Hed squired 'em, danced 'em, druv 'em,
Fust this one, an' then thet, by spells,—
All is, he couldn't love 'em.

But long o' her his veins 'ould run
All crinkly like curled maple,
The side she breshed felt full o' sun
Ez a south slope in Ap'il.

She thought no v'ice hed sech a swing
Ez his'n in the choir;
My! when he made Ole Hundred ring
She *knowed* the Lord was nigher.

An' she'd blush scarlit, right in prayer,
When her new meetin'-bunnet
Felt somehow thru' its crown a pair
O' blue eyes sot upon it.

Thet night, I tell ye, she looked *somel*
She seemed to've gut a new soul,

For she felt sartin-sure he'd come,
Down to her very shoe-sole.

She heered a foot, an' knowed it, tu,
A-raspin' on the scraper,—
All ways to once her feelin's flew
Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat,
Some doubtfle o' the sekle;
His heart kep' goin' pity-pat,
But her'n went pity Zekle.

An' yit she gin her cheer a jerk
Ez though she wished him furder,
An' on her apples kep' to work,
Parin' away like murder.

"You want to see my Pa, I s'pose?"
"Wal . . . no . . . I come dasignin'"—
"To see my Ma? She's sprinklin' clo'es
Agin to-morrer's i'nin'."

To say why gals act so or so,
Or don't, 'ould be presumin';
Mebby to mean *yes* an' say *no*
Comes nateral to women.

He stood a spell on one foot fust,
Then stood a spell on t'other,
An' on which one he felt the wust
He couldn't ha' told ye, nuther.

Says he, "I'd better call agin";
Says she, "Think likely, Mister":
Thet last word pricked him like a pin,
An' . . . Wal, he up an' kist her.

When Ma bimeby upon 'em slips,
Huldy sot pale ez ashes,
All kin' o' smily roun' the lips
An' teary roun' the lashes.

For she was jes' the quiet kind
Whose naturs never vary,
Like streams that keep a summer mind
Snowhid in Jenooary.

The blood clost roun' her heart felt glued
Too tight for all expressin',
Tell mother see how metters stood,
An' gin 'em both her blessin'.

Then her red come back like the tide
Down to the Bay o' Fundy,
An' all I know is, they was cried
In meetin' come nex' Sunday.

At Anchor.

AH, many a year ago, dear wife,
We floated down this river,
Where the hoar willows on its brink
Alternate wave and shiver;
With careless glance we viewed askance
The king-fisher at quest,—
And scarce would hear the reed-wren near,
Who sang beside her nest;
Nor dreamed that e'er our boat would be
Thus anchored, and at rest,
Dear love,
Thus anchored, and at rest!

Oh, many a time the wren has built
Where those green shadows quiver,—
And many a time the hawthorn shed
Its blossoms on the river,—
Since that sweet noon of sultry June,
When I my love confessed,
While with the tide our boat did glide
Adown the streamlet's breast,
Whereon our little shallop lies
Now anchored, and at rest,
Dear love,
Now anchored, and at rest!

The waters still to ocean run,
Their tribute to deliver,
And still the hawthorns bud and bloom
Above the dusky river;
Still sings the wren,—the water-hen
Still skims the ripple's crest;
The sun as bright — as on that night —
Sinks slowly down the west;
But now our tiny craft is moored;
Safe anchored, and at rest,
Dear love,
Safe anchored, and at rest!

For this sweet calm of after days
We thank the bounteous Giver,
Who bids our life flow smoothly on
As this delicious river.
A world — our own — has round us grown,
Wherein we twain are blest;
Our child's first words than songs of birds
More music have expressed;
And all our centered happiness
Is anchored, and at rest,
Dear love,
Is anchored, and at rest!

Would You Be Young Again?

WOULD you be young again?
So would not I —
One tear to memory given,
Onward I'd hie.
Life's dark flood forded o'er,
All but at rest on shore,
Say, would you plunge once more,
With home so nigh?

If you might, would you now
Retrace your way?
Wander through stormy wilds,
Faint and astray?
Night's gloomy watches fled,
Morning all beaming red,
Hope's smiles around us shed,
Heavenward — away.

Where, then, are those dear ones,
Our joy and delight?
Dear and more dear, though now
Hidden from sight.
Where they rejoice to be,
There is the land for me.
Fly, time, fly speedily;
Come, life and light.

Threescore and Ten.

I'VE numbered my threescore and ten to-night,
And my life, like a winding stream,
Looks strangely clear to my faded old sight;
Like the visions seen in a dream.

There were light and shade when my life was young,
A blending of gladness and tears;
There was much to sadden, yet sweet hope flung
A charm o'er the coming years.

And they came and went like a far-off song;
I lived them — and saw them depart!
Some robbed me of treasures I'd cherished for long,
Some planted new joys in my heart.

Oh, the grave! the grave! I have jewels there
That I wore with a mother's pride;
One went in his childish beauty rare,
And one in his manhood died!

He is strangely near me — my fair-haired boy —
Though I've climbed such wearisome steeps,
Since my tears first fell on the tiny grave,
Where my beautiful baby sleeps.

How my poor heart ached as they bore him away
To his narrow resting-place,
And I longed to clasp him — the beautiful clay,
With his innocent, angel face!

And my soldier boy, as I held him close,
In the morn of his infant life,
How little I thought he should fall, one day,
In the battle-field's deadly strife!

But I'll find him there with the little one,
Together, my first born and last,
Yes, three who have called me "mother," have gone
O'er the stream that speeds on so fast.

Then why should I grieve for the dear ones gone,
Since I'm sure they're safe in the fold?
While, feeble and falt'ring, we've struggled on,
They've never grown weary or old.

But I'm almost home, even now, I think,
There's a sound of a muffled oar,
And I see, through the mist on the river's brink,
A light from the other shore.

I wanted to tell you I only wait
For my Father's beckoning hand,
When I'll enter the beautiful, pearly gate,
That opes on the better land.

I think He'll accept me — the Master above —
Unworthy, yet washed and made white,
I'll share in the rest that he gives his beloved,
And satisfied wake in his sight!

The Flower of Middle Age.

COME now and give us dahlias in both arms,
E'en till the topmost touch our throat and lips,—
Bright golden dahlias, holding sunset's charms,
And red ones, crimson to their red leaf's tips;
Upon their white and pink and purple page
We'll write the story of our Middle Age.

For there are flowers for all. In childish years
We gather daisies in the fresh green grass,
Or blowing bluebells wet with dewy tears,
And gentian stars that never child could pass.
O blessed flowers, O blessed days, when we
With small feet sought you o'er the broomy lea!

Then came the golden days of maidenhood,
When life was full of beauty and perfume;
And with Love's roses at our breast we stood,
And culled the heliotrope's and lily's bloom,
And bound the orange blossom, sweet and fair,
With passionate carnations in our hair.

Now, in the August of our Middle Age,
We hail thee, dahlia, as our fittest sign;
Thy stately splendor at this later stage
Befits us more than rose or trailing vine,
So strong and straight, so staid in all thy ways,
Meeting the sun and wind with steadfast gaze.

When childish hands have held the daisy stars,
And on our breast Love's roses oft have lain;
When orange flowers and honeysuckle bars
For whitening heads will never bloom again,—
Then, in the prime and harvest of our year,
We'll choose the dahlia's circle, bright and clear.

Work.

DO thy work speedily, child of the earth,
Waste not a moment in sorrow or mirth;
Life is a mystery shaded with gloom,
Bearing us rapidly on to the tomb.

Work hath been given thee, do not delay,
Carelessly trifling the moments away;
Dreamily floating on life's silvery tide,
Stealthily down to the ocean we glide.

Life is receding, the hours as they pass
Bear in their bosoms the sands from its glass
Why should we linger on time's crested wave
Gathering baubles to garnish the grave?

Think you the treasures that lie in the deep
Would soften earth's pillow, or sweeten our sleep?
Far sooner the thought, that earth's glittering toys
Were lost in the struggle for holier joys.

A Night-Watch.

"IS it not morning yet?" From side to side
The sick girl tossed, hot-browed and heavy-eyed,
And moaned with feverish breath when I replied,
"It is not morning yet."

"Is it not morning yet?" O leaden hours,
How slow they move! The night more darkly lowers.
Cold on the wan leaves strike the sudden showers;
"It is not morning yet."

"Is it not morning yet?" The clock ticks on,
The sands fall slow; not half the night is gone;
Again I answer to that restless moan,—
"It is not morning yet."

"Is it not morning yet?" With tender care
I bathe her brow, and smooth her damp, fair hair,
And try to soothe her with soft words of prayer.
"It is not morning yet."

"Is it not morning yet?" If she could sleep,
If those tired lids those burning eyes could keep!
God knows the thorns are sharp, the road is steep!
"It is not morning yet."

"Is it not morning yet?" "'Tis coming, dear."
And, while I speak, the shadows press more near,
And all the room grows colder with my fear.
"It is not morning yet."

"Is it not morning yet?" How faint and low
The piteous accents! Do not tremble so;
My heart, nor fail me, while I answer. "No;
It is not morning yet."

"Is it not morning yet?" I bow my head;
God answers, while the eastern sky glows red
And smiles upon the still face on the bed,—
"Yes, it is morning now!"

What Does It Matter?

IT matters little where I was born,
Or if my parents were rich or poor;
Whether they shrank at the cold world's scorn,
Or walked in the pride of wealth secure;
But whether I live an honest man,
And hold my integrity firm in my clutch,
I tell you, my brother, plain as I can,
It matters much!

It matters little where be my grave,
If on the land or in the sea,
By purling brook, or 'neath stormy wave,
It matters little or naught to me;
But whether the angel of death comes down
And marks my brow with a loving touch,
As the one who shall wear the victor's crown,
It matters much!

White Poppies.

O MYSTIC, mighty flower, whose frail white leaves,
Silky and crumpled like a banner furled,
Shadow the black mysterious seeds that yield
The drop that soothes and lulls a restless world;
Nepenthes for our woe, yet swift to kill,
Holding the knowledge of both good and ill.

The rose for beauty may outshine thee far,
The lily hold herself like some sweet saint
Apart from earthly grief, as is a star
Apart from any fear of earthly taint;
The snowy poppy like an angel stands
With consolation in her open hands.

Ere history was born, the poets sung
How godlike Thone knew thy compelling power,
And ancient Ceres, by strange sorrows wrung,
Sought sweet oblivion from thy healing flower.
Giver of Sleep! Lord of the Land of Dreams!
O simple weed, thou art not what man deems!

The clear-eyed Greeks saw oft their God of Sleep
Wandering about through the black midnight hours,
Soothing the restless couch with slumbers deep,
And scattering thy medicated flowers,
Till hands were folded for their final rest,
Clasping white poppies o'er a pulseless breast.

We have a clearer vision; every hour
Kind hearts and hands the poppy juices mete,
And panting sufferers bless its kindly power,
And weary ones invoke its peaceful sleep.
Health has its rose and grape and joyful palm,
The poppy to the sick is wine and balm.

I sing the poppy! The frail, snowy weed!
The flower of mercy! that within its heart
Doth keep "a drop serene" for human need,
A drowsy balm for every bitter smart.
For happy hours the rose will idly blow—
The poppy hath a charm for pain and woe.

The Watchers of Lake Michigan.

THERE'S a lull in the scathing storm to-night,
And the mountain waves sink down,
And the sun glints back on the cyclone's track,
And glitters o'er surge and foam.

But where are the dead, the speechless dead,
Locked in those caverns gray;
Whose smile beamed bright in the household hearts,
That sunny yesterday?

Our torches gleam on the shifting sand,
Our wild eyes scan the wave;
Shall never the wing of some seagull point
Where the lost have found their grave?

Will never some sentinel angel tell
How the brave at their posts stood still;
The dauntless captain upon the prow,
The helmsman at the wheel?

How they battled in vain with the gnomes of death
Till the surges beat them back;
Till the wing of the pitiless hurricane swept
Like a demon across their track.

Our torches gleam o'er the shifting sands,
Our wild eyes scan the deep;
Will the lost drift in with the evening tide?
Will the dead sail in their sleep

To the waiting arms outspread for them —
The beautiful and fair,
With the sea-weeds round their pallid forms,
The sea-sand in their hair?

Ah, well, we may conjure the winds in vain,
We may question the tides for nought,
But somewhere out of God's great domain
Our treasures shall be brought.

And somewhere within the mighty bounds
Of this vast eternity,
They will wait for us in the peaceful lands
Where there is no more sea.

Drowned.

THE dancing wavelets roam the pebbly beach,
Through its dark fringe of floating sea-weed stray;
Their foamy hands across the sands they reach
To grasp the beauteous shells once thrown away.
And birds, far out, fearless alike and free,
Swooping, dip their tired pinions in the sea.

O waves, how cruel in this Sabbath calm!
Would thou didst writhe and labor in a storm!
Thy agony would bring my soul a balm;
When thy great heart with rage grew fierce and warm,
My lips would smile at thy devouring wrath,
To hear thee seething in thy lightning's path.

I dare not look into the smiling deep,
It gives me back a snowy, upturned face,
The blue-veined eyelids drooping as in sleep,
And stilled the heart 'neath the white arms' embrace;
So, stooping down to watch the ripples flow,
I saw it in the bitter long ago.

By cool-lipped waves the tender mouth was kissed,
But no red flush swept up the forehead fair;
Sweet meadow flowers, with hearts like amethyst,
Were tangled in the meshes of her hair,
And tightly clasped within her lifeless hands
The amber shells she gathered from the sands.

She lay as calmly as though rocked to rest
On the white, panting bosom of the sea,
And folded in its liquid garments, lest
The winds should wake her with their elfin glee;
While low-voiced nereids broke the hush with song
That, murmuring, filled their caves the whole day long.

O buried past! I would not that your wrath
Should haunt me thus; that those sweet, sapphire eyes
That looked on me in love's unwavering faith,
Thou shouldst bring to me in this sad disguise;
With pale, unopening lids, lashes unstirred by breath,
Till my grieved soul but whispers — is it death?

Ah, yes, the treacherous sea chilled her young life,
And mine in hers for all the coming days;
Would I could leap into their playful strife,
Be wrapt in sleep, while the slow waves would raise
A monody above my soulless breast,
And my hands fold them in untroubled rest!

But no, these overhanging rocks among,
Where the winds moan and sob in ceaseless grief,
I will await to hear my death-bell rung —
Above the eddying of the distant reef;
To see thee coming, Maude, a seraph crowned,
To lead me where love's truer joys are found.

Something Left Undone.

LABOR with what zeal we will,
Something still remains undone;
Something uncompleted still
Waits the rising of the sun.

By the bedside, on the stair,
At the threshold, near the gates,
With its menace or its prayer,
Like a mendicant it waits,

Waits, and will not go away;
Waits, and will not be gainsaid;
By the cares of yesterday,
Each to-day is heavier made;

Till at length the burden seems
Greater than our strength can bear;
Heavy as the weight of dreams,
Pressing on us everywhere.

And we stand, from day to day,
Like the dwarfs of times gone by,
Who, as Northern legends say,
On their shoulders held the sky.

The Eternal Years.

HOW shalt thou bear the cross that now
So dread a weight appears?
Keep quietly to God, and think
Upon the eternal years.

Austerity is little help,
Although it somewhat cheers;
Thine oil of gladness is the thought
Of the eternal years.

Set hours and written rule are good,
Long prayer can lay our fears;
But it is better calm for thee
To count the eternal years.

Full many things are good for souls,
In proper times and spheres;
Thy present good is in the thought
Of the eternal years.

Thy self-upbraiding is a snare,
Though meekness it appears;
More humbling is it far for thee
To face the eternal years.

Brave quiet is the thing for thee,
Chiding thy scrupulous fears;
Learn to be real, from the thought
Of the eternal years.

Bear gently, suffer like a child,
Nor be ashamed of tears;
Kiss the sweet cross, and in thy heart
Sing of the eternal years.

Thy cross is quite enough for thee,
Though little it appears;
For there is hid in it the weight
Of the eternal years.

Death will have rainbows round it, seen
Through calm contrition's tears,
If tranquil Hope but trims her lamp
At the eternal years.

The Paradox of Time.

TIME goes, you say? Ah no!
Alas! time stays, we go,
Or else, were this not so,
What need to chain the hours,
For youth were always ours?
Time goes, you say?—ah no!

Ours is the eyes' deceit
Of men whose flying feet
Lead through some landscape low;
We pass, and think we see
The earth's fixed surface flee
Alas, Time stays—we go!

Once, in the days of old,
Your locks were curling gold,
And mine had shamed the crow;
Now, in the self-same stage,
We've reached the silver age;
Time goes, you say?—ah no!

Once, when my voice was strong,
I filled the woods with song
To praise your "rose" and "snow":
My bird, that sung, is dead;
Where are your roses fled?
Alas, Time stays—we go!

See, in what traversed ways,
What backward fate delays
The hopes we used to know;
Where are our old desires—
Ah, where those vanished fires?
Time goes, you say?—ah no!

How far, how far, O Sweet,
The past behind our feet
Lies in the even-glow!
Now, on the forward way,
Let us fold hands and pray;
Alas, Time stays—we go!

Mortality.

H, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?
Like a fast-flitting meteor, a fast-flying cloud,
A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,
He passes from life to his rest in the grave.

The leaves of the oak and the willow shall fade,
Be scattered around and together be laid;
And the young and the old, and the low and the high,
Shall moulder to dust and together shall lie.

The child that a mother attended and loved,
The mother that infant's affection that proved,
The husband that mother and infant that blessed,
Each, all, are away to their dwelling of rest.

The maid on whose cheek, on whose brow, in whose eye,
Shone beauty and pleasure, — her triumphs are by;
And the memory of those that beloved her and praised,
Are alike from the minds of the living erased.

The hand of the king that the scepter hath born
The brow of the priest that the miter hath worn,
The eye of the sage, and the heart of the brave,
Are hidden and lost in the depths of the grave.

The peasant whose lot was to sow and to reap,
The herdsman who climbed with his goats to the steep,
The beggar that wandered in search of his bread,
Have faded away like the grass that we tread.

The saint that enjoyed the communion of heaven,
The sinner that dared to remain unforgiven,
The wise and the foolish, the guilty and just,
Have quietly mingled their bones in the dust.

So the multitude goes, like the flower and the weed,
That wither away to let others succeed;
So the multitude comes, even those we behold,
To repeat every tale that hath often been told.

For we are the same that our fathers have been;
We see the same sights that our fathers have seen,—
We drink the same stream, and we feel the same sun,
And we run the same course that our fathers have run.

The thoughts we are thinking our fathers would think;
From the death we are shrinking from, they too would shrink;
To the life we are clinging to, they too would cling;
But it speeds from the earth like a bird on the wing.

They loved, but their story we cannot unfold;
They scorned, but the heart of the haughty is cold;
They grieved, but no wail from their slumbers may come;
They joyed, but the voice of their gladness is dumb.

They died, — ay! they died; and we things that are now,
Who walk on the turf that lies over their brow,
Who make in their dwellings a transient abode,
Meet the changes they met on their pilgrimage road.

Yea! hope and despondency, pleasure and pain,
Are mingled together like sunshine and rain;

And the smile and the tear and the song and the dirge
Still follow each other, like surge upon surge.

'Tis the wink of an eye, 'tis the draught of a breath,
From the blossom of health to the paleness of death,
From the gilded saloon to the bier and the shroud,—
Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?

The Bay of New York.

HAVE you ever seen the Bay of New York,
That beautiful arm of the sea,
Where a navy at anchor in safety may ride,
Nor fear any danger from wind or from tide,
Though storms break over the lea?—

On whose waters the flags of all nations are seen,
And "Jack" always cheerful at work;
Where Commerce, white-winged, her wonders unfold
From every land bringing treasures untold,
In the beautiful Bay of New York?—

Whose quiet and safety the mariner hails,
As he comes from over the main;
Where the Storm-King's cohorts held unlimited sway,
In boisterous revels by night and by day,—
While the elements loudly complain?—

Where the emigrant's eye kindles up with delight,
As he looks on the not distant shore;

And he feels with glad joy he is nearing his home,
Brought safe through the perils of Ocean's wild foam,
To dwell in peace evermore?—

Where the poor and the suffering of every land
Here turn their sad, longing eyes;
And hope which seemed dead and banished for years,
Far beneath their suffering, their sorrows and tears,
In immortal vigor arise?—

Where the sunlight at noon tips each wavelet with gold,
And the waters all sparkling and bright,
Protectingly throws round each craft its strong arm,
And seeming to hold them aloof from all harm,
While glowing with beauty and light?

O beautful waters! whose freightage of wealth,
There is nothing on earth to compare;
Ye teach me a lesson in all your bright ways,
Doing duty, regardless of censure or praise,
While heaviest burdens ye bear.

And, harbor of safety, thou seemest to me
Like the port of the heavenly rest;
Where joy all immortal lights up every face,
Life's voyage well over, made perfect by grace,
Saints enter the Realms of the Blest.

Going Home.

DRAWN by horses with decorous feet,
A carriage for one went through the street,
Polished as anthracite out of the mine,
Tossing its plumes so stately and fine,
As nods to the night a Norway pine.

The passenger lay in Parian rest,
As if, by the sculptor's hand caressed,
A mortal life through the marble stole,
And then till an angel calls the roll
It waits awhile for a human soul.

He rode in state, but his carriage-fare
Was left unpaid to his only heir;
Hardly a man, from hovel to throne,
Takes to this route in coach of his own,
But borrows at last and travels alone.

The driver sat in his silent seat;
The world, as still as a field of wheat,
Gave all the road to the speechless twain,
And thought the passenger never again
Should travel that way with living men.

Not a robin held its little breath,
But sang right on in the face of death;
You never would dream, to see the sky

Give glance for glance to the violet's eye,
That ought between them could ever die.

A wain bound east met the hearse bound west,
Halted a moment, and passed abreast;
And I verily think a stranger pair
Have never met on a thoroughfare,
Or a dim by-road, or anywhere;

The hearse as slim and glossy and still
As silken thread at a woman's will,
Who watches her work with tears unshed;
Broiders a grief with needle and thread,
Mourns in pansies and cypress the dead;

Spotless the steeds in a satin dress,
That run for two worlds the Lord's Express,—
The wain gave a lurch, the hearse moved on,—
A moment or two, and both were gone;
The wain bound east, the hearse bound west,
Both going home, both looking for rest.
The Lord save all, and his name be blest!

De Profundis.

THE face which, duly as the sun,
Rose up for me with life begun,
To mark all bright hours of the day
With daily love, is dimmed away—
And yet my days go on, go on.

The tongue which, like a stream, could run
Smooth music from the roughest stone,
And every morning with "Good day"
Made each day good, is hushed away—
And yet my days go on, go on.

The heart which, like a staff, was one
For mine to lean and rest upon;
The strongest on the longest day
With steadfast love, is caught away—
And yet my days go on, go on.

And cold before my summer's done,
And deaf in Nature's general tune,
And fallen too low for special fear,
And here, with hope no longer here—
While the tears drop, my days go on.

The world goes whispering to its own,
"This anguish pierces to the bone."
And tender friends go sighing round,
"What love can ever cure this wound?"
My days go on, my days go on.

The past rolls forward on the sun
And makes all night. O dreams begun,
Not to be ended! Ended bliss!
And life, that will not end in this!
My days go on, my days go on.

Breath freezes on my lips to moan;
As one alone, once not alone,
I sit and knock at Nature's door,
Heart-bare, heart-hungry, very poor,
Whose desolated days go on.

I knock and cry . . . Undone, undone!
Is there no help, no comfort . . . none?
No gleaning in the wide wheat-plains
Where others drive their loaded wains?
My vacant days go on, go on.

This Nature, though the snows be down,
Thinks kindly of the bird of June.
The little red hip on the tree
Is ripe for such. What is for me,
Whose days so winterly go on?

No bird am I to sing in June,
And dare not ask an equal boon.
Good nests and berries red are Nature's
To give away to better creatures—
And yet my days go on, go on.

I ask less kindness to be done—
Only to loose these pilgrim-shoon

(Too early worn and grimed) with sweet
Cool deathly touch to these tired feet,
Till days go out which now go on.

Only to lift the turf unmown
From off the earth where it has grown,
Some cubit-space, and say, "Behold!
Creep in, poor Heart, beneath that fold,
Forgetting how the days go on."

What harm would *that* do? Green anon
The sward would quicken, overshone
By skies as blue; and crickets might
Have leave to chirp there day and night
While my new rest went on, went on.

From gracious Nature have I won
Such liberal bounty? May I run
So, lizard-like, within her side,
And there be safe, who now am tried
By days that painfully go on?

—A Voice reproves me thereupon,
More sweet than Nature's, when the drone
Of bees is sweetest, and more deep,
Than when the rivers overleap
The shuddering pines, and thunder on.

God's Voice, not Nature's — night and noon
He sits upon the great white throne
And listens for the creatures' praise.
What babble we of days and days?
The Dayspring He, whose days go on.

He reigns above, he reigns alone:
Systems burn out and leave His throne
Fair mists of seraphs melt and fall
Around Him, changeless amid all! —
Ancient of days, whose days go on!

He reigns below, He reigns alone,—
And having life in love foregone
Beneath the crown of sovran thorns,
He reigns the jealous God. Who mourns
Or rules with HIM, while days go on?

By anguish which made pale the sun,
I hear Him charge his saints that none
Among the creatures anywhere
Blaspheme against Him with despair,
However darkly days go on.

—Take from my head the thorn-wreath brown!
No mortal grief deserves that crown.
O supreme Love, chief misery,
The sharp regalia are for *Thee*
Whose days eternally go on!

For us . . . whatever's undergone,
Thou knowest, willest what is done.
Grief may be joy misunderstood:
Only the Good discerns the good.
I Trust Thee while my days go on.

Whatever's lost, it first was won:
We will not struggle nor impugn.

Perhaps the cup was broken here
That heaven's new wine might show more clear.
I praise Thee while my days go on.

I praise Thee while my days go on;
I love Thee while my days go on!
Through dark and dearth, through fire and frost,
With emptied arms and treasure lost,
I thank Thee while my days go on!

And, having in thy life-depth thrown
Being and suffering (which are one),
As a child drops some pebble small
Down some deep well and hears it fall,
Smiling . . . so I! THY DAYS GO ON!

Life.

SHORT days flying, swift years rolling
Downward toward eternity;
Ere we understand our longings
Oft the open grave we see.
Cares and wishes crowd together,
Changing ever in the breast:
With the morning comes the knowledge,
Joy fulfilled can give no rest.

Schemes of life and plans for living
Fancy bids us ever try,
But their sweet fulfillment never
Brings us that for which we sigh.
Young, we fancy pleasure deathless,
A far-stretching wonder-land;
Soon it fades, and sorrow follows;
On the desert waste we stand.

Yes, from out the brightest morning
Oft we harvest bitter pain,
Joys soon past, or lightly gathered,—
Life so fruitless and so vain!
Ah! what weary hours of longing
Lost occasion brings the mind!
How the wounded soul may languish,
Never balm or healing find!

Then, when evening closes on thee,
Weep not as thine hours depart;

Only peace and holy stillness
Gather close within thine heart.
Then, the woes of life forgetting,
From its stain and guilt set free,
Will thy last and lowly pillow
Like the tender rose-leaf be.

Tears, Idle Tears.

TEARS, idle tears, I know not what they mean;
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes
In looking on the happy autumn fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail
That brings our friends up from the under world,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awakened birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remembered kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feigned
On lips that are for others; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.

The Fisher's Daughter.

ON brave New England's sterile shore
There stood a cot in days of yore,
Where dwelt, as thus the good folks say,
A-near the noisy ocean's play,
A fisher with one daughter fair,
Who never knew a mother's care.

The gentle maiden's name was Ruth,
Well-fitted to her soul of truth;
Her lonely father held her fast
Within his heart, his all, his last;
A winsome flower amid the gloom,
She filled her desert life with bloom.

And sitting by the fire at night,
When wind and billow strove in might,
She read him many a stirring tale
Of ocean-life, of storm and gale;
More often still the maiden took
Sweet lessons from the Holy Book.

And words of cheer like stars of light,
Made earthly darkness clear and bright;
But ah! not always were the twain
At peace when storm-wind tossed the main;
Oft was the fisher far from home
When tempests set the waves a-foam.

Then Ruth would weep for many an hour
And plead for Heaven's saving power;
On high her breathings fond were heard,
So strong that angel wings were stirred.
And saintly helpers downward sped
To hover round the sailor's head.

Oh, well for us that human sight
Can never pierce the future's night;
Life's sad and bitter, or its sweet,
Comes only to our onward feet,
So we may calmly hold us still,
And wait to see "Our Father's" will.

One morn when placid ocean smiled,
The fisher left his darling child;
At eve when winds made mournful wail,
They bore him homeward cold and pale,
And waves a moment stopped to heed,
And shudder at their fearful deed.

Then pitiless the deep went on,
Unthinking of the spirit gone;
But Ruth, though not a tear would start,
The briny waves rolled o'er her heart,
And mad, bewildered with its pain,
The strength of reason left her brain.

They laid her father's manly form
Deep in the grave, where never storm,
Nor billow's wrath, nor lightning's gleam,
Might wake him from his quiet dream;

Though life was surging to and fro,
It left him lying calm and low.

The neighbors strove with earnest care
To ease the burden she must bear,
But wild with anguish, she would flee
For comfort to the sounding sea;
She roamed upon its barren shore,
Telling her sorrow o'er and o'er.

A fisher's wife, with kindly thought,
The broken-hearted maiden sought,
Entreating her at once to come
As sharer in her lowly home;
Of no avail her tender plea,
For Ruth would walk beside the sea.

One evening fair, when moon and stars
Had girdled earth with shining bars,
And swelling waves they seemed to hold,
In chains of silver and of gold,
The maid had climbed a lofty rock
Which long had stood the billows' shock.

And standing in the moonlight there,
Her plaintive accents thrilled the air;
A fisher on his homeward way,
A moment paused to hear her lay,
And though his life were ages long,
He never might forget that song.

"Come nearer me, father, I hark to thy calling,
Stretch thy arms wider, yet wider, I pray;
I will come to thee now, for thy voice in the waters
Has followed and plead with me day after day."

The strain had ceased, with horror chill
The fisher stood transfixed and still,
Then onward sped to reach the steep—
A sudden plash awoke the deep,
And on the ocean's peaceful breast
She floated to her tranquil rest.

Upon the shore, when night had passed,
They found her lifeless form at last,
And in her eyes, serene and blue,
The light of heaven was breaking thro',
While on her worn and pallid face
Was look of sweet angelic grace,
And near the ever-murmuring tide,
They laid her by her father's side.

Soliloquy of a Lost Soul.

INFINITE years in torments must I spend?
And never, never, never have an end?
Oh, must I dwell in torturing despair
As many years as atoms in the air?
When these are done, as many to ensue
As blades of grass on hills and dales do grow?
When these are past, as many left behind
As leaves in forests shaken by the wind?
When these are fled, as many on the march
As starry camps that gild the spangled arch?
When these are gone, as many thousands more
As grains of sand upon the ebbing shore?
When these run out, as many millions more
As moments in the millions passed before?
When all these doleful years are spent in pain,
And multiplied by millions yet again
Till numbers drown the thought!—
Could I suppose
That then my wretched years would have a close,
This would afford a hope. But oh, I shiver
To ponder on the dreadful word forever!
The burning gulf where I blaspheming lie
Is time no more, but vast eternity.
The growing torments I endure for sin
Are never more to end, but always to begin.

Oh that the hand that cursed me to the lash
Would bless me back to nothing with a dash!
Unjustly I the Sin-avenger hate;
Blaspheme this awful God and curse my fate!
'Tis just: since I, who bear the eternal load,
Contemned the death of an Almighty God.

Give Them Now.

IF you have gentle words and looks, my friends,
To spare for me—if you have tears to shed
That I have suffered—keep them not, I pray,
Until I hear not, see not, being dead.

If you have flow'rs to give—fair lily buds,
White roses, daisies, (meadow-stars that be
Mine own dear namesakes)—let them smile and make
The air, while yet I breathe it, sweet for me.

For loving looks, though fraught with tenderness,
And kindly tears, though they fall thick and fast,
And words of praise, alas! can naught avail
To lift the shadows from a life that's past.

And rarest blossoms, what can they suffice,
Offered to one who can no longer gaze
Upon their beauty? Flow'rs in coffins laid
Impart no sweetness to departed days.

The Prairie Path.

UPON the brown and frozen sod
The wind's wet fingers shake the rain;
The bare shrubs shiver in the blast
Against the dripping window-pane.
Inside strange shadows haunt the room,
The flickering fire-lights rise and fall,
And make I know not what strange shapes
Upon the pale gray parlor wall.

I feel but do not see these things—
My soul stands under other skies;
There is a wondrous rádiance comes
Between my eyelids and my eyes.
I seem to pull down at my feet
God's gentian flowers, as on I pass
Through a green prairie still and sweet
With blowing vines and blowing grass.

And then—ah! whence can he have come?—
I feel a small hand touching mine;
Our voices first are like the breath
That sways the grass and scented vine.
But clearer grow the childish words,
Of Egypt and of Hindostan;
And Archie's telling me again
Where he will go when he's a man.

The smell of pine is strangely blent
With sandal-wood and broken spice
And cores of calamus; the flowers
Grow into gems of wondrous price.
We sit down in the grass and dream;
His face grows strangely bright and fair:
I think it is the amber gleam
Of sunset in his pale gold hair.

But while I look I see a path
Across the prairie to the light;
And Archie with his small bare feet
Has almost passed beyond my sight.
Upon my heart there falls a smile,
Upon my ears a soft adieu;
I see the glory in his face,
And know *his* dreams have all come true.

Some day I shall go hence and home—
We shall go hence, I mean to say,
And as we pass the shoals of Time,
"My brother," I shall, pleading, say,
"There was upon the prairie wide
A spot so dear to thee and me,
I fain would see it ere we walk
The fields of Immortality."

The Last Night in Gray.

HIS graduate hours at last are done,
And praise, like rich aroma,
Has made their memory halcyon
With plaudit and diploma.
His thoughts are toward the future set,
And now, as night advances,
He broods, the ambitious young cadet,
O'er fate's conflicting chances.

He notes the new sword on his knee,
And dreams, while none may heed him,
Of where, in silent years to be,
Its bloodless blade shall lead him;
Till soon, from realms of fancy drawn
By delicate gradations,
Two differing visions vaguely dawn
Among his meditations.

One is a field whose tracks recall
How war has whirled and shattered
The wild grim residue of all
Its ghastly anger shattered.
And here the watchful soldier sees
His own form starkly lying,
Where moves the twilight's pensive breeze
Above the dead and dying.

But happier far, in martial state,
The next fair vision rises:
He gains, triumphant and elate,
The conqueror's prize of prizes.
Beneath a radiant mid-day sun,
He rides through welcoming masses,
While the pale domes of Washington
Loom stately where he passes.

"O sword," he cries, with looks that glow,
With eager speech disjointed,
"Which vision of the two shall grow
My destiny appointed?" . . . .
Ah, longing soul, you vainly wait
For portent or suggestion:
Your future in the sheath of fate
Lies like the sword you question.

Undecorated.

WHAT though the sounds of mourning
Quiver along the air,
Low music and martial treading,
And strewing of blossoms fair;
What though the dead are sleeping,—
There must be sowing and reaping,
And harvesting of corn.

See! what disturbs the ploughshare—
Smooth and hollow and round?
What is this noisome something
Buried beneath the ground?
Here shall the hand be sowing,
Here shall the wheat be growing,
Waiting the harvest morn.

"Missing!" was that the legend?
No tale of the dying breath?
No record of bitter anguish
That ended at last in death?
Only a brave heart sleeping
Under the sowing and reaping,
All lonely and forlorn.

Ah! it was sowing and reaping—
The sowing of blood and tears,
The reaping of countless blessings
That come with the rolling years—

Battle and danger braving,
Keeping our banner waving
O'er men as freemen born.

There is binding of wreaths and garlands
When comrades gather around
To scatter the spring's sweet trophies
On hallowed and holy ground.
But think of the "missing" sleeping
Under the sowing and reaping,
Waiting God's harvest morn!

Endurance.

HOW much the heart may bear and yet not break!
How much the flesh may suffer, and not die!
I question much if any pain or ache
Of soul or body brings our end more nigh:
Death chooses his own time; till that is sworn,
All evils may be borne.

We shrink and shudder at the surgeon's knife,
Each nerve recoiling from the cruel steel
Whose edge seems searching for the quivering life;
Yet to our sense the bitter pangs reveal,
That still, although the trembling flesh be torn,
This also can be borne.

We see a sorrow rising in our way,
And try to flee from the approaching ill;

We seek some small escape; we weep and pray;
But when the blow falls, then our hearts are still;
Not that the pain is of its sharpness shorn,
But that it can be borne.

We wind our life about another life;
We hold it closer, dearer than our own:
Anon it faints and fails in deathly strife,
Leaving us stunned and stricken and alone;
But ah! we do not die with those we mourn,—
This also can be borne.

Behold, we live through all things,—famine, thirst,
Bereavement, pain; all grief and misery,
All woe and sorrow; life inflicts its worst
On soul and body,—but we cannot die.
Though we be sick, and tired, and faint, and worn,—
Lo, all things can be borne!

Atheism.

"THERE is no God," the wicketh saith,
"And truly it's a blessing,
For what he might have done with us
It's better only guessing."

"There is no God," a youngster thinks,
"Or really, if there may be,
He surely didn't mean a man
Always to be a baby."

"Whether there be," the rich man thinks,
"It matters very little,
For I and mine, thank somebody,
Are not in want of victual."

Some others also to themselves,
Who scarce so much as doubt it,
Think there is none, when they are well,
And do not think about it.

But country-folks who live beneath
The shadow of the steeple;
The parson, and the parson's wife,
And mostly married people;

Youths green and happy in first love,
So thankful for illusion;
And men caught out in what the world
Calls guilt and first confusion;

And almost every one when age,
Disease, and sorrow strike him,—
Inclines to think there is a God,
Or something very like him.

A View across the Roman Campagna.

OVER the dumb campagna-sea,
Out in the offing through mist and rain,
St. Peter's Church heaves silently
Like a mighty ship in pain,
Facing the tempest with struggle and strain.

Motionless waifs of ruined towers,
Soundless breakers of desolate land!
The sullen surf of the mist devours
That mountain range upon either hand,
Eaten away from its outline grand.

And over the dumb campagna-sea
Where the ship of the church heaves on to wreck,
Alone and silent as God must be
The Christ walks! — Ay, but Peter's neck
Is stiff to turn on the foundering deck.

Peter, Peter, if such be thy name,
Now leave the ship for another to steer,
And proving thy faith evermore the same
Come forth, tread out through the dark and drear,
Since he who walks on the sea is here!

Peter, Peter! — he does not speak,—
He is not as rash as in old Galilee.
Safer a ship, though it toss and leak,
Than a reeling foot on a rolling sea!
And he's got to be round in the girth, thinks he.

Peter, Peter! — he does not stir,—
His nets are heavy with silver fish:
He reckons his gains, and is keen to infer,
. . . "The broil on the shore, if the Lord should wish,—
But the sturgeon goes to the Cæsar's dish."

Peter, Peter, thou fisher of men,
Fisher of fish wouldst thou live instead,—
Haggling for pence with the other Ten,
Cheating the market at so much a head,
Griping the bag of the traitor dead?

At the triple crow of the Gallic cock
Thou weep'st not, thou, though thine eyes be dazed:
What bird comes next in the tempest shock?
. . . Vultures! See,— as when Romulus gazed,
To inaugurate Rome for a world amazed!

In the Half-Way House.

AT twenty we fancied the blest middle ages
A spirited cross of romantic and grand;
All templars and minstrels and ladies and pages,
And love and adventure in Outre-Mer-land.
But ah! where the youth dream of building a minster,
The man takes a pew and sits reckoning his pelf,
And the graces wear fronts, the muse thins to a spinster,
When Middle-Age stares from one's glass to himself!

Do you twit me with days when I had an ideal,
And saw the sear future through spectacles green?
Then find me some charm, while I look round and see all,
These fat friends of forty shall keep me nineteen;
Should we go on pining for chaplets of laurel,
Who've paid a perruquier for mending our thatch,
Or, our feet swathed in baize, with our fate pick a quarrel,
If instead of cheap bay-leaves she sent a dear scratch?

We called it our Eden, that small patent baker,
When life was half moonshine and half Mary Jane;
But the butcher, the baker, the candlestick-maker; —
Did Adam have duns and slip down a back-lane?
Nay, after the fall did the modiste keep coming
With last styles of fig-leaf to Madam Eve's bower?
Did Jubal, or whoever taught the girls thrumming,
Make the patriarchs deaf at a dollar the hour?

As I think what I was, I sigh, *Desunt nonulla!*
Years are creditors Sheridan's self could not bilk;
But then, as my boy says, "What right has a fellah
To ask for the cream when himself spilt the milk?"
Perhaps when you're older, my lad, you'll discover
The secret with which Auld Lang Syne there is gilt,—
Superstition of old man, maid, poet, and lover,—
That cream rises thicker on milk that was spilt.

We sailed for the moon, but in sad disillusion,
Snug under Point Comfort are glad to make fast,
And strive (sans our glasses) to make a confusion
'Twixt our rind of green cheese and the moon of the past;
Ah, Might-have-been, Could-have-been, Would-have-been rascals,
He's a genius or fool whom ye cheat at twoscore,
And the man whose boy-promise was likened to Pascal's
Is thankful at forty they don't call him bore!

With what fumes of fame was each confident pate full!
How rates of insurance should rise on the Charles!
And which of us now would not feel wisely grateful,
If his rhymes sold as fast as the Emblems of Quarles?
E'en if won, what's the good of life's medals and prizes?
The rapture's in what never was or is gone;
That we miss them makes Helens of plain Ann Elizas,
For the goose of to-day still is memory's swan.

And yet, who would change the old dream for new treasure?
Make not youth's sourest grapes the best wine of our life?
Need he reckon his date by the Almanac's measure
Who is twenty life-long in the eyes of his wife?

Ah, Fate, should I live to be nonagenarian,
Let me still take Hope's frail I. O. U's upon trust,
Still talk of a trip to the Island Macarian,
And still climb the dream-tree for — ashes and dust!

The Milkmaid.

A MILKMAID, who poised a full pail on her head,
Thus mused on her prospects in life, it is said:
"Let me see,— I should think that this milk will procure
One hundred good eggs, or fourscore, to be sure.

"Well then,— stop a bit,— it must not be forgotten,
Some of these may be broken, and some may be rotten;
But if twenty for accident should be detached,
It will leave me just sixty sound eggs to be hatched.

"Well, sixty sound eggs,— no, sound chickens, I mean:
Of these some may die,— we'll suppose seventeen,
Seventeen! not so many,— say ten at the most,
Which will leave fifty chickens to boil or to roast.

"But then there's their barley; how much will they need?
Why, they take but one grain at a time when they feed,—
So that's a mere trifle; now, then, let us see,
At a fair market price how much money there'll be.

"Six shillings a pair — five — four — three-and-six,
To prevent all mistakes, that low price I will fix;
Now what will that make? fifty chickens, I said,—
Fifty times three-and-sixpence,— *I'll ask Brother Ned!*

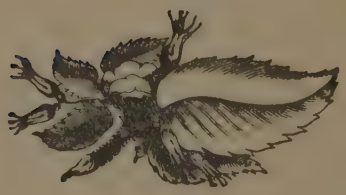
"Oh, but stop,— three-and-sixpence a *pair* I must sell 'em!
Well, a pair is a couple,— now then let us tell 'em·
A couple in fifty will go (my poor brain!),
Why, just a score times, and five pair will remain.

"Twenty-five pair of fowls,— now how tiresome it is
That I can't reckon up so much money as this!
Well there's no use in trying, so let's give a guess,—
I'll say twenty pounds, *and it can't be no less.*

"Twenty pounds, I am certain, will buy me a cow,
Thirty geese and two turkeys,— eight pigs and a sow;
Now if these turn out well, at the end of the year,
I shall fill both my pockets with guineas, 'tis clear."

Forgetting her burden, when this she had said.
The maid superciliously tossed up her head;
When, alas for her prospects! her milk-pail descended,
And so all her schemes for the future were ended.

This moral, I think, may be safely attached,—
"Reckon not on your chickens before they are hatched."



Garfield.

SHOT at his post! We never knew how strong
The hand that grasped the helm, till came the shock—
When the fingers tightened in Pain's helpless lock,
And the good ship quivered all her beams along.
This was no deed of mutineers that throng
In clamorous revolt—no sunken rock—
Madness at Death's own grandeur dared to mock—
A pitiful fool has worked the state this wrong.
Not with the waves alone; with rebel's hate,
With friend's distrust, he battled. Slowly grew
Our confidence in him who steered us on,
Danger that found him faithful, crowns him great.
The Ship of State sails on; but of her crew
Who well might take the helm, he being gone?

Veil, now, O Liberty, thy blushing face,
At the fell deed that thrills a startled world;
While fair Columbia weeps in dire disgrace,
And bows in sorrow o'er the banner furled.

No graceless tyrant falls by vengeance here,
'Neath the wild justice of a secret knife;
No red ambition ends its grim career,
And expiates its horrors with its life.

Not here does rash revenge misguided burn,
To free a nation with th' assassin's dart,

Or roused despair in angry madness turn,
And tear its freedom from a despot's heart.

But where blest liberty so widely reigns,
And peace and plenty mark a smiling land;
Here the mad wretch its fair white record stains,
And blurs its beauties with a "bloody hand."

Here the elect of millions, and the pride
Of those who own his mild and peaceful rule
Here virtue sinks and yields the crimson tide,
Beneath the vile unreason of a fool!

He died last night. The sufferer has gone
Into a land more beautiful than this.
The clouds of death have yielded to the sun
Of glory, and of everlasting bliss.

Not on a battle-field he lost his life,
Where shouts and cheers the soul with courage fill;
His firm and valiant heart, prepared for strife,
Broke on a bed of honor, harder still.

O brave and patient heart that beats no more!
Thy manly form, stretched on the gloomy bier,
Thou canst not see the millions who deplore
Thy stern, sad fate, with sympathizing tear.

Whose heart, and though it were of stone or lead,
Would not be pierced with pangs of pitying woe,
To think that he, the Nation's chosen head,
In prime of life is lying cold and low.

O let us mourn, but let us not despair,—
Mourn for the brave who suffered for his land
A painful death, with calm and manly air,—
The victim of a foul assassin's hand.

Yet let us not forget that, though he fell,
His country, free and mighty, cannot fall;
In Liberty's great realm all must be well,
Where all stand up for one, and one for all.

And to our dead, whose life, so sadly spent,
Let us, in honor of his memory,
Build in our Nation's heart a monument,
To shine through all our country's history.

Toll o'er the stricken land the solemn bells,
Along the hills and palpitating coast.
Furl ye the flags that drape ten thousand masts
Upon the seas, 'mong surging billows tost.

A prince of our's, of nature's regal line,
Sleeps by the sounding surf, unwaked to-day;
Around him roars the funeral dirge of time,
Old ocean's canticles, unhushed alway.

While nations weep, or dynasties go down,
Or whirlwinds wreck the cities of the past,
Or tempests shiver down earth's mightiest thrones,
Or sands o'er empires drift, tossed by the blast,

Down by the sounding sea, with tears we lay,
The great, strong heart, so strained and overtasked,

The wan, worn hands, that would have wrought this day
The sturdy toils for which the century asked.

Sealed is the page the hushed historian keeps,
Silenced the records of great deeds undone;
Bowed are the councilors at the city gates;
Mournful the people, with white lips, struck dumb.

O chronicler, who writeth up the years,
Stand on the threshold with thy pen uplift,
His record lieth yonder where the stars
Of vast eternities uncounted drift.

His fame on all the winds had flown,
His words had shaken crypt and throne,
Like fire, on camp and court and cell,
They dropped, and kindled as they fell.

Pride, lust of power, and glory slept;
Yet still his heart its young dream kept,
And, hastening like the deluge dove,
Still sought the resting-place of love.

So the flood of emotion, deep and strong,
Troubled the land as it swept along,
But left a result of holier lives,
Tenderer fathers and worthier wives.
Old friends embraced, long held apart
By evil counsel and pride of heart,
And penitence saw through misty tears,

In the bow of hope on its cloud of fears,
The promise of heaven's eternal years —
The peace of God for the world's alloy,
Beauty for ashes and oil for joy.

If, for the aye to come, this hour
Of trial hath vicarious power,
And, blest by Thee, our present pain
Be Liberty's eternal gain,
Thy will be done.

They Loved Him.

LOUD wails the wild September gale
Across the land with solemn sound.
Adown the sky the dark clouds sail,
The oak has fallen to the ground.

To-day we stand with tearful eyes,
For God has been more wise than we —
With folded hands our Chieftain lies
Beside the sobbing Eastern sea.

By grateful millions loved and blessed,
How glorious it is to fall —
To sink to death's eternal rest,
So honored, so revered by all.

How grand to pass from his proud height,
With all to speak his honest praise,
Into the fair and fadeless light
Of brighter and of better days.

He sprang to life from lowly soil;
He rose to honor and renown
By honest worth and manly toil —
No weight could crush or keep him down.

We pay our tribute to his dust,
We render homage to his soul;
His course was clear, his words were just —
No faction held him in control.

How wise the way he firmly trod,
How strong the purpose of his life;
How true his trust and faith in God —
His love of children, home, and wife.

Through months of anguish and of pain,
With failing strength and wandering mind,
None heard his pallid lips complain —
He had no hatred for his kind.

And she whose presence made more bright
His hallowed home, will always be
A ray of hope, a beacon-light,
To *all* on life's domestic sea.

With willing hands and helpful mind
She toiled and struggled by his side
Until the end. Still true and kind,
She held his cold hand when he died.

Her name is honored everywhere —
"The faithful friend, the worthy wife" —

A nation will delight to bear
The burdens of her widowed life.

Garfield, farewell! your name is dear,
The world is proud of your fair fame;
No more the vile and envious sneer
Shall fall when millions speak your name.

Your work is done, though incomplete,
And undisturbed your dust shall dwell
On Erie's shore, where billows beat
Along the land you loved so well.

And thousands yet shall seek that shore,
As pilgrims seek some sacred shrine
Of holy saint whom they adore —
Through endless years your life will shine.

In work you bore a noble part;
Your feet were foremost in the race;
Your deeds shall dwell in every heart,
Your manhood glorified your place.

Another Year.

"ANOTHER year," she said, "another year,
These roses I have watched with so much care,
Have watched and tended without pain or fear,
Shall bud and bloom for me exceeding fair—
Another year," she said, "another year."

"Another year," she said, "another year,
My life perhaps may bud and bloom again,
May bud and bloom like these red roses here,
Unlike them, tended with regret and pain—
Another year perhaps, another year.

"Another year, ah yes, another year,
When bloom my roses, all my life shall bloom;
When summer comes, my summer too'll be here,
And I shall cease to wander in this gloom—
Another year, ah yes, another year.

"For ah, another year, another year,
I'll set my life in richer, stronger soil,
And prune the weeds away that creep too near,
And watch and tend with never-ceasing toil—
Another year, ah yes, another year."

Another year, alas! another year,
The roses all lay withering ere their prime,
Poor blighted buds, with scanty leaves and sere,
Drooping and dying long before their time—
Another year, alas! another year.

And ah, another year, another year,
Lo, like the blighted dying buds, she lay,
Whose voice had prophesied without a fear,
Whose hand had trimmed the rose-tree day by day,
To bloom another year, another year.

Old.

BY the wayside, on a mossy stone,
Sat a hoary pilgrim, sadly musing;
Oft I marked him sitting there alone,
All the landscape, like a page, perusing;
Poor, unknown,
By the wayside, on a mossy stone.

Buckled knee and shoe, and broad-brimmed hat;
Coat as ancient as the form 'twas folding;
Silver buttons, queue, and crimped cravat;
Oaken staff his feeble hand upholding:
There he sat!
Buckled knee and shoe, and broad-brimmed hat.

Seemed it pitiful he should sit there,
No one sympathizing, no one heeding,
None to love him for his thin gray hair,
And the furrows all so mutely pleading
Age and care:
Seemed it pitiful he should sit there.

It was summer, and we went to school,
Dapper country lads and little maidens;

Taught the motto of the "Dunce's stool,"—
Its grave import still my fancy ladens,—
"Here's a fool!"
It was summer, and we went to school.

When the stranger seemed to mark our play,
Some of us were joyous, some sad-hearted,
I remember well, too well, that day!
Oftentimes the tears unbidden started
Would not stay
When the stranger seemed to mark our play.

One sweet spirit broke the silent spell,
Oh, to me her name was always heaven
She besought him all his grief to tell,
(I was then thirteen, and she eleven,)
Isabel!
One sweet spirit broke the silent spell.

"Angel," said he, sadly, "I am old;
Earthly hope no longer hath a morrow;
Yet, why I sit here thou shalt be told."
Then his eye betrayed a pearl of sorrow,
Down it rolled!
"Angel," said he, sadly, "I am old.

"I have tottered here to look once more
On the pleasant scene where I delighted
In the careless, happy days of yore,
Ere the garden of my heart was blighted
To the core:
I have tottered here to look once more.

"All the picture now to me how dear!
E'en this gray old rock where I am seated
Is a jewel worth my journey here;
Ah, that such a scene must be completed
With a tear!
All the picture now to me how dear!

"Old stone school-house!—it is still the same;
There's the very step I so oft mounted;
There's the window creaking in its frame,
And the notches that I cut and counted
For the game.
Old stone school-house, it is still the same.

"In the cottage yonder I was born;
Long my happy home that humble dwelling;
There the fields of clover, wheat, and corn;
There the spring with limpid nectar swelling;
Ah, forlorn!
In the cottage yonder I was born.

"Those two gateway sycamores you see
Then were planted just so far asunder
That long well-pole from the path to free,
And the wagon to pass safely under:
Ninety-three!
Those two gateway sycamores you see.

"There's the orchard where we used to climb
When my mates and I were boys together,

Thinking nothing of the flight of time,
Fearing naught but work and rainy weather;
Past its prime!
There's the orchard where we used to climb.

"There's the rude three-cornered chestnut-rails,
Round the pasture where the flocks were grazing,
Where, so sly, I used to watch for quails
In the crops of buckwheat we were raising;
Traps and trails!
There the rude three-cornered chestnut rails.

"There's the mill that ground our yellow grain;
Pond and river still serenely flowing;
Cot there nestling in the shaded lane,
Where the lily of my heart was blowing.
Mary Jane!
There's the mill that ground our yellow grain.

"There's the gate on which I used to swing,
Brook, and bridge, and barn, and old red stable;
But alas! no more the morn shall bring
That dear group around my father's table;
Taken wing!
There's the gate on which I used to swing.

"I am fleeing,—all I loved have fled.
Yon green meadow was our place for playing;
That old tree can tell of sweet things said
When around it Jane and I were straying;
She is dead!
I am fleeing,—all I loved have fled.

"Yon white spire, a pencil on the sky,
Tracing silently life's changeful story,
So familiar to my dim old eye,
Points me to seven that are now in glory
There on high!
Yon white spire, a pencil on the sky.

"Oft the aisle of that old church we trod,
Guided thither by an angel mother;
Now she sleeps beneath its sacred sod;
Sire and sisters, and my little brother,
Gone to God!
Oft the aisle of that old church we trod.

"There I heard of Wisdom's pleasant ways;
Bless the holy lesson!—but, ah, never
Shall I hear again those songs of praise,
Those sweet voices silent now forever!
Peaceful days!
There I heard of Wisdom's pleasant ways.

"There my Mary blessed me with her hand
When our souls drank in the nuptial blessing,
Ere she hastened to the spirit-land,
Yonder turf her gentle bosom pressing;
Broken band!
There my Mary blessed me with her hand.

"I have come to see that grave once more,
And the sacred place where we delighted,

Where we worshiped, in the days of yore,
Ere the garden of my heart was blighted
To the core!
I have come to see that grave once more.

"Angel," said he, sadly, "I am old;
Earthly hope no longer hath a morrow,
Now, why I sit here thou hast been told."
In his eye another pearl of sorrow,
Down it rolled!
"Angel," said he sadly, "I am old."

By the wayside, on a mossy stone,
Sat the hoary pilgrim sadly musing;
Still I marked him sitting there alone,
All the landscape, like a page, perusing,
Poor, unknown!
By the wayside, on a mossy stone.

Summer.

AROUND this lovely valley rise
The purple hills of Paradise.
Oh, softly on yon banks of haze
Her rosy face the summer lays;
Becalmed along the azure sky
The argosies of cloudland lie,
Whose shores with many a shining rift
Far-off their pearl-white peaks uplift.

Through all the long midsummer day
The meadow sides are sweet with hay,
I seek the coolest sheltered seat,
Just where the field and forest meet,—
Where grow the pine trees, tall and bland,
The ancient oaks, austere and grand,
And fringy roots and pebbles fret
The ripples of the rivulet.

I watch the mowers as they go
Through the tall grass, a white-sleeved row;
With even stroke their scythes they swing,
In tune their merry whetstones ring.
Behind, the nimble youngsters run,
And toss their thick swaths in the sun.
The cattle graze; while warm and still
Slopes the broad pasture, basks the hill,
And bright, when summer breezes break,
The green wheat crinkles like a lake.

The butterfly and bumble-bee
Come to the pleasant woods with me;
Quickly before me runs the quail,
Her chickens skulk behind the rail,
High up the lone wood-pigeon sits,
And the woodpecker pecks and flits.
Sweet woodland music sinks and swells,
The brooklet rings its tinkling bells.

The swarming insects drone and hum,
The partridge beats his throbbing drum,
The squirrel leaps among the boughs,
And chatters in his leafy house;
The oriole flashes by; and look—
Into the mirror of the brook,
Where the vain bluebird trims his coat,
Two tiny feathers fall and float.

As silently, as tenderly,
The down of peace descends on me.
Oh, this is peace! I have no need
Of friend to talk, or book to read;
A dear Companion here abides,
Close to my thrilling heart he hides;
The holy silence is his voice;
I lie, and listen, and rejoice.

The Wreck of the "Grace of Sunderland."

"THEY ring for service," quoth the fisherman;
"Our parson preaches in the church to-night."
"And do the people go?" my brother asked.

"Ay, Sir; they count it mean to stay away,
He takes it so to heart. He's a rare man,
Our parson; half a head above us all."

"That's a great gift, and notable," said I.

"Ay, Sir; and, when he was a younger man,
He went out in the life-boat very oft,
Before the 'Grace of Sunderland' was wrecked.
He's never been his own man since that hour;
For there were thirty men aboard of her,
Anigh as close as you are now to me,
And ne'er a one was saved.

"They're lying now,
With two small children, in a row; the church
And yard are full of seamen's graves, and few
Have any names.

"She bumped upon the reef;
Our parson, my young son, and several more,
Were lashed together with a two-inch rope,
And crept along to her,—their mates ashore,
Ready to haul them in. The gale was high,

The sea was all a boiling, seething froth,
And God Almighty's guns were going off,
And the land trembled.

"When she took the ground,
She went to pieces like a lock of hay
Tossed from a pitchfork. Ere it came to that,
The captain reeled on deck with two small things,—
One in each arm,—his little lad and lass.
Their hair was long, and blew before his face,
Or else, we thought he had been saved; he fell,
But held them fast.

"The crew,—poor luckless souls!
The breakers licked them off; and some were crushed,
Some, swallowed in the yeast, some, flung up dead,
The dear breath beaten out of them; not one
Jumped from the wreck upon the reef to catch
The hands that strained to reach, but tumbled back
With eyes wide open.

"But the captain lay
And clung—the only man alive. They prayed—
'For God's sake, captain, throw the children here!'
'Throw them!' our parson cried;—and then she struck;
And he threw one, a pretty two-years child;
But the gale dashed him on the slippery verge,
And down he went. They say they heard him cry.

"Then he rose up, and took the other one,
And all our men reached out their hungry arms,

And cried out 'Throw her, throw her!' and he did;
He threw her right against the parson's breast,
And, all at once, a sea broke over them,
And they that saw it from the shore have said
It struck the wreck, and, piecemeal, scattered it,
Just as a woman might the lump of salt
That 'twixt her hands into the kneading pan
She breaks and crumbles on her rising bread.

"We hauled our men in; two of them were dead!
The sea had beaten them, their heads hung down;
Our parson's arms were empty, for the wave
Had torn away the pretty, pretty lamb!
We often see him stand beside her grave;
But 'twas no fault of his, no fault of his."

Bustin' the Temperance Man.

HOARSELY demanding "Gimme a drink!"
He sidled up to the bar,
And he handled his glass with the air of one
Who had often before "been thar."
And a terrible glance shot out of his eyes,
And over his hearers ran
As he muttered, "I'm hangin' around the town
Fer to bust that temp'rance man!

"I've heerd he's a comin' with singin' and sich,
And prayin' and heaps of talk;
And allows he'll make all fellers what drink
Toe square to the temp'rance chalk.
I reckon"—and here he pulled out a knife
That was two feet long or more,
And he handled his pistols familiarly,
While the crowd made a break for the door.

The good man came and his voice was kind,
And his ways were meek and mild;
"But I'm goin' to bust him," the roarer said—
"Jess wait till he gits me riled."
Then he playfully felt of his pistol belt,
And took up his place on the stage,
And waited in wrath for the temperance man
To further excite his rage.

But the orator didn't; he wasn't that sort,
For he talked right straight to the heart,
And somehow or other the roarer felt
The trembling tear-drops start.
And he thought of the wife who had loved him well,
And the children that climbed his knee,
And he said, as the terrible pictures were drawn,
"He's got it kerrect — that's me!"

Then his thoughts went back to the years gone by,
When his mother had kissed his brow,
As she tearfully told of the evils of drink,
And he made her a solemn vow,
That he never should touch the poisonous cup
Which had ruined so many before;
And the tears fell fast as he lowly said:
"He's ketchin' me more and more!"

He loosened his hold on his pistols and knife,
And covered his streaming eyes.
And though it was homely, his prayer went up —
Straight up to the starlit skies.
Then he signed his name to the temperance pledge,
And holding it high, said he,
"I came here to bust that temp'rance chap,
But I reckon he's busted me."

The New Comer.

LANCASHIRE DIALECT.

THA'RT welcome, little bonny brid,
But shouldn't ha' come just when tha did,—
Toimes are bad.
We're short o' pobbies for eawr Joe,
But that, of course, tha didn't know,
Did ta, lad?

Aw've often yeard mi feyther tell
'At when aw coom i' th' world misel
Trade wur slack;
An' neaw it's hard wark pooin' throo,—
But aw munna fear thee, iv aw do
Tha'll go back.

Cheer up! these toimes'll awter soon;
Aw'm beawn to beigh another spoon,—
One for thee;
An', as tha's sich a pratty face,
Aw'll let thee have eawr Charley's place
On mi knee.

Hush! hush! tha munno cry this way,
But get this sope o' cinder tay
While it's warm;

Mi mother used to give it me,
When aw wur sich a lad as thee,
In her arm.

Hush a babby, hush a bee,—
Oh, what a temper! dear a me,
Heaw tha skroikes!
Here's a bit o' sugar, sithee;
Howd thi noise, an' then aw'll gie thee
Owt tha loikes.

We'n nobbut getten coarsish fare,
But eawt o' this tha'll ha' thi share,
Never fear.
Aw hope tha'll never want a meal,
But allus fill thi bally weel
While tha'rt here.

An' tho' we'n childer two or three,
We'll make a bit o' reawm for thee,—
Bless thee, lad!
Tha'rt th' prattiest brid we han i' th' nest;
Come, hutch up closer to mi breast,—
Aw'm thi dad.

Domestic Love.

DOMESTIC Love! not in proud palace halls
Is often seen thy beauty to abide;
Thy dwelling is in lowly cottage walls,
That in the thickets of the woodbine hide;
With hum of bees around, and from the side
Of woody hills some little bubbling spring,
Shining along through banks with harebells dyed;
And many a bird, to warble on the wing,
When Morn her saffron robe o'er heaven and earth doth fling.

O love of loves! to thy white hand is given
Of earthly happiness the golden key;
Thine are the joyous hours of winter's even,
When the babes cling around their father's knee;
And thine the voice that on the midnight sea
Melts the rude mariner with thoughts of home,
Peopling the gloom with all he longs to see.
Spirit! I've built a shrine, and thou hast come,
And on its altar closed — forever closed thy plume!